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U.S. pulls out of UNIDO

VIENNA (AFP) — The United States announced Monday it was pulling out of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), saying that, like UNESCO, the agency was inefficient. The U.S. delegate to UNIDO, John Ritch, said the withdrawal would take effect on Dec. 31, 1996 in line with a requirement that member countries that want to pull out must give a year's notice. UNIDO, which works to promote industrial development in poor countries, thus becomes the second U.N. agency ditched by the United States under pressure from a Congress critical of what it sees as wasteful spending by these organisations. The United States quit UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, in 1985, also accusing it of Third World bias. The United States provided a quarter of UNIDO's budget. Its departure means the agency's 1996-97 budget will be slashed from $209 million to $157 million, forcing the elimination of 233 jobs. Mr. Ritch made the announcement as UNIDO began a five-day general conference at its Vienna headquarters to discuss its budget and programmes.

Arab League lobbies for Libya

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League on Monday called for the quick inclusion of Libya in the Euro-Mediterranean conference after its session in Barcelona last week. Libya's absence from the Barcelona conference was "abnormal. We condemned it and I ask that Libya be included as quickly as possible," the league secretary-general, Esmat Abdul Meguid, told the Arabic daily Al Hayat. Dr. Abdul Meguid said he planned to "hold a colloquium in the framework of the league to discuss the post-Barcelona" situation. "The dialogue between Europe and the Arab World no longer concerns only economics, but also political, cultural and humanitarian questions," Dr. Abdul Meguid said. European countries barred Libya from Barcelona due to international sanctions imposed on it since 1992 for its harbouring of two Libyans suspected in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing which left 270 dead. While in Paris after the Euro-Med conference, Mr. Abdul Meguid called on France, Britain and the U.S. to accept the trial of the two Libyan suspects by Scottish law in an independent, United Nations tribunal.

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King greets French company chief

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday received at the Royal Court Gerome Monod, chairman of the board of directors of the French Lyonnaise Deseaux Company, one of the world's major companies specialised in water. Discussion at the meeting focused on projects the company could carry out in Jordan in cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. The meeting was attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Qasem (see earlier story on page 3).

Mahathir receives King's message

KUALA LUMPUR (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah on Monday met with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad and handed him a message from His Majesty King Hussein. The message dealt with Jordanian-Malaysian relations in various fields. Also Monday, Prince Abdullah visited a military exhibition hosted by Malaysia.

Danish queen to visit Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Denmark's Queen Margarethe II and her husband Prince Henrik will visit Jordan in May at the invitation of Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, a Royal Court statement said Monday. The statement, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, did not specify the exact date of the visit. But the palace in Copenhagen said it will take place May 7-9, followed by two days of a private tour, the Associated Press reported. It said the royal couple will visit Israel May 12-14.

Dutch premier due here Jan. 4

AMMAN (Petra) — Dutch Prime Minister Vim Cook will pay an official visit to Jordan Jan. 4 at the head of an official delegation including Foreign Minister Hans van Mirlo at an invitation by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. A Foreign Ministry statement said Mr. Cook will hold talks with senior officials during his two-day visit to Jordan on means of boosting and bolstering bilateral relations.

Kabariti meets Sudanese envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Monday received Sudanese Minister of State Mustafa Osman Ismail, who conveyed to Mr. Kabariti a message from his Sudanese counterpart. Mr. Kabariti and Mr. Ismail discussed bilateral relations and means of promoting them. Mr. Kabariti also met with Egyptian Ambassador in Amman Wagih Hamdi who handed him messages from Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa and Minister of Industry, Trade and Mineral Resources Ibrahim Fawzi. The messages dealt with bilateral relations and the outcome of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit held in Amman in October.

Kabul forces advance on rebels

KABUL (AP) — Government soldiers advanced on rebel positions and captured several key posts south of the Afghan capital Monday, a government spokesman said. During a large overnight offensive that began Sunday, rebel fighters from the Taliban militia were pushed back from their mountain top positions along the Rishkor hills. The government advance could not be independently confirmed, although the sounds of fighting could be heard to the south of the city. A government spokesman claimed the Talibans suffered heavy casualties but it was impossible to verify. The Rishkor hills have been used by Talibans to target Kabul with their mortars and rockets.

GCC opens summit with call for peace

Extremism, Iraq, ties with Israel dominate Muscat meeting in absence of King Fahd

MUSCAT (Agencies) — Gulf Arab leaders opened their annual summit with a peace call here on Monday in the absence of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, forced to miss the gathering for the first time because of illness.

His place was taken by Crown Prince Abdullah at the summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which comprises Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Sultan Qaboos of host country Oman, which along with Qatar has moved towards Israel, praised the "positive steps achieved in the Middle East peace process," in a speech opening the meeting.

"We express our hopes that the peace process will continue and expand on all tracks.

"We affirm that the peace we seek is a peace we believe will provide stability and prosperity for the region, security and confidence for its people, and is a just and comprehensive peace which will eradicate the causes of violence... and replace them with tolerance."

He added: "We appeal to all states to achieve this goal and to take all necessary measures to eliminate difficulties and obstacles that may stand in its way."

Of the GCC, he said: "Without cooperation we shall never be able to achieve our goals and it is up to us to strive steadfastly to overcome obstacles that threaten to prevent or impede us in achieving them."

The agenda of the three-day summit focuses on Iraq, regional security, including terrorism which is a growing concern in the Gulf as well as the peace process and normalisation with Israel.

"It's clear that the Gulf Arab countries must confront a problem of joint security and that certain enemies have targeted them," Prince Abdullah said on arrival in Muscat.

A carbomb in Riyadh on Nov. 13 blew up a U.S army building used to train the Saudi National Guard run by Prince Abdullah, killing seven people.

"Saudi Arabia, under King Fahd's leadership, believes the only way to confront these challenges is for these countries to pool their human, military, political and economic potential," he said.

The United Arab Emirates' (UAE) president steered a middle course on ties with Iraq in remarks published on Monday, saying he wanted reconciliation but only after Baghdad implemented all United Nations resolutions.

Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan, in an interview with Kuwait's Al Siyasseh newspaper, also blamed Iran for last month's failed talks in Doha to settle its territorial dispute with the UAE.

Iraq will present possibly the most intractable issue at the annual GCC summit.

"We want to achieve reconciliation after Iraq implements all U.N. resolutions," Sheikh Zayed said.

"Iraq has to implement what it has to and then take what it deserves... when a party returns the rights it owes to others, should it not in return get its rights... this is what should happen, nothing more than that... but to give and not to take, this cannot happen."

A senior Iraqi official urged the GCC leaders to open a new page in relations with Baghdad, the official Al Thawra reported.

The newspaper quoted

(Continued on page 7)

Saudi king remains hospitalised for 5th day amid unclear reports

RIYADH (Agencies) — King Fahd remained hospitalised for the fourth day with a virtual news blackout on his health triggering speculation that his condition may be more serious than official statements have said.

Officials insist that the monarch of the world's major oil producer is recovering from exhaustion and arthritis. But so far, there has been no indication when he will leave hospital.

On Sunday, the royal court issued a statement saying the king, who suffers from diabetes and weight problems, had suffered a "temporary medical emergency" because of exhaustion and overwork.

The court said that the results of a battery of tests were "reassuring," but that he has been ordered to rest for an unspecified period.

The Saudi cabinet said meanwhile it was relieved that King Fahd's medical tests were good because it meant he could continue to lead the kingdom, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

It reported Prince Sultan, second deputy prime minister and minister of defence and aviation, who headed the weekly meeting, saying: "We thank God for what he gave to the custodian of the holy shrines in terms of health so that he can continue leading this country towards more stability and security and prosperity ..."

The French News Agency (AFP) reported from Dubai that the Saudi royal family has begun to discuss sharing out the duties of King Fahd during his illness without challenging his designated successor Crown Prince Abdullah. It quoted diplomats and experts as its sources.

The crown prince's arrival at a Muscat summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) sent reassuring signals to oil markets which stabilised after initial panic following the news of the king's hospitalisation on Thursday.

The lack of any public infighting to replace the king had further calmed the markets, a London analyst said.

Despite a new law which seems to open up the field for others to lay claim to the Saudi throne, the royal family is unlikely to want to provoke a feud over King Fahd's successor in the event of his death or ouster, experts said.

"If the royal family knows one thing, it is that it cannot allow any row over succession in the current circumstances," a Western diplomat in Riyadh told AFP.

Ross launches new Israel-Syria shuttle

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross launched new Middle East initiative on Monday with Israel hoping for a "dramatic" move to end the Syrian deadlock.

The Middle East coordinator was met at the airport by his Israeli counterpart, Uri Savir, and was to hold talks with Foreign Minister Ehud Barak before travelling to Damascus overnight Tuesday.

He will return to Israel on Tuesday to meet Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

"Ross is going to Damascus to examine the Syrian positions after a long interruption in negotiations," said Mr. Savir, the Israeli coordinator for Middle East peace.

Syria said on Monday it was ready to fulfil the requirements of peace with Israel.

Western diplomats in the Syrian capital said they expected Mr. Ross to test the waters for talks to resume at a low-level between Syria and Israel, following positive signals from both sides.

"Syria is conscious of the importance of a peace which guarantees a total withdrawal and is willing to fulfill peace requirements on which an accord will be based," official Damascus Radio said.

"A real, just and balanced peace is impossible without an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the June 4, 1967 lines and from South Lebanon," the radio said.

The official Syria Times daily said Damascus was "welcoming Mr. Ross and any drastic peace effort but was not ready to give up any grain of her land and right. Peace before Israel's total pullout is impossible."

Mr. Ross' latest shuttle diplomacy is thought to be part of plans for a new peace mission to the region later this month by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Israel said Monday it expected a "dramatic initiative" from the United States to unlock the talks which ground to a halt in June, after chiefs of staff meeting in Washington failed to agree security arrangements for an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan.

"Mr. Ross will test the waters and see if he can arrange a resumption of talks probably at a low level, either ambassadorial or between experts," said a Western diplomat in Damascus.

"There is positive electricity in the air," the diplomat said.

But diplomats cautioned against too much optimism

(Continued on page 7)

First NATO units in Bosnia, Croatia

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The vanguard of a 60,000-member North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) force landed in Bosnia and Croatia on Monday to lay the groundwork for enforcing the Balkan peace.

Fifty-six British communications experts arrived in the Croatian port city of Split. In Sarajevo, a camouflaged British C-130 Hercules transport plane carrying a seven-member British logistics team landed at the airfield in the Bosnian capital. Officials said two more flights were expected later Monday.

"These are the first definite NATO troops," said Paul Elmer, British U.N. spokesman.

Some 2,600 soldiers have been assigned to lay the groundwork for the whole force. In all, 60,000 NATO troops — a third from the United States — will take

(Continued on page 7)

His Majesty King Hussein on Monday receives Viktor Posavalyuk, a special envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin (Petra photo)

King receives Russian message

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday met with Viktor Posavalyuk, a special envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who conveyed to the King a verbal message from the Russian president and best wishes on the occasion of the King's 60th birthday.

King Hussein and Mr. Posavalyuk discussed developments in the Middle East peace process and means of enhancing Jordanian-Russian relations.

Mr. Posavalyuk voiced appreciation of Jordan's key role in the peace process and paid tribute to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed in October 1994.

King Hussein and the Russian envoy underlined the need to achieve progress on other tracks of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

Also on Monday, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti met with Mr. Posavalyuk, who handed the minister a message from his Russian counterpart Andrei Kozyrev.

Mr. Kabariti and Mr. Posavalyuk discussed the peace process, the situation in Iraq, international terrorism and the situation in former Yugoslavia.

(Continued on page 7)

JPA protests proposed changes to Press and Publication Law

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan Press Association (JPA) President Suleiman Qudah said on Monday he planned to meet with the ministers of information and justice to protest against the government's proposed amendments to the Press and Publications Law.

The proposed amendments, which expands the government's powers to control the press, were drawn up by the Ministry of Information in line with comments made by His Majesty King Hussein voicing dissatisfaction at the role of the Jordanian media, both state-run and private-owned.

The proposed amendments empower the government the power to close down newspapers and demand that chief editors be serving members of the Jordanian Press Association (JPA) for at least seven years.

The amendments also impose an imprisonment of three months to three years for violators of the law.

"We are against the amendments in principle," Mr. Qudah said. "The current law has enough" restrictions.

The Press and Publications Law, enacted in May 1993, has been criticised by human rights organisations as restricting freedom of expression guaranteed in the Constitution and the National Charter. Article 42 of the law prohibits publications from publishing, among others, information that harms national unity. It also prohibits the publication of any material that degrade religion or sects or instigate crime or increase hatred and articles that insult the heads of state of Arab Muslim or friendly countries.

Samir Hiyari, president of the JPA's freedoms committee and member of the JPA

(Continued on page 7)

Social Security Corporation to appeal ruling on compensation

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Social Security Corporation (SSC) is appealing a decision by the Court of First Instance that the SSC should pay end-of-service compensation (gratuity) in addition to monthly pension for a retired private sector company employee for the period he was covered under social security offered by the corporation, a senior SSC official said Monday.

If the ruling is upheld on appeal, then it will mean a sweeping change in the social security system and will set a precedent that could open the way for tens of thousands of applications for similar payment — amounting to tens of millions of dinars — from the SSC.

The SSC official, who declined to be identified, asserted the ruling of the Court of First Instance appeared not to have taken into consideration the law of the Social Security Corporation, which began premium-collection operations since mid-1980.

Under the law, said the official, the SSC is obliged to pay monthly pension or a lumpsum settlement to employees upon retirement but not both. The employer is obliged to pay end-of-employment benefits to the employee until the time the employee went under SSC coverage.

The employee's subscription to social security is limited to five per cent of his or her monthly salary; the employer pays another 10 per cent and remits the total amount to the SSC on a monthly basis, and this, under the SSC law, absolves the employer from an end-of-service settlement to the employee and shift the obligation to the SSC.

The ruling made by the Court of First Instance said the SSC pay gratuity for the period that an employee of the Jordan Electric Power Company was covered by the SSC as well as monthly pension.

Hypothetically, it would mean the SSC paying 15

(Continued on page 7)

Peres is due here tomorrow

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres will visit Jordan on Wednesday for talks with His Majesty King Hussein as part of consultations with Israel's Arab partners in peace ahead of a White House meeting with President Bill Clinton on Dec. 11, officials and diplomats said.

It will be Mr. Peres' first visit to Jordan after assuming office as prime minister following the Nov. 4 assassination of his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin, under whom he served as foreign minister.

According to officials, the King and Mr. Peres are expected to review the course of the Middle East peace process, the latest developments on the Israeli-Palestinian track of the peace process, prospects for progress in Israel's peace negotiations with Syria and Lebanon, the implementation of the Oct. 26, 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty and regional economic cooperation in the wake of the Middle East and North Africa conference held in Amman in October.

Mr. Peres' visit here is also expected to "pave the way for concluding" a Jordanian-Israeli transport agreement, one of the more than 20 accords called for in the peace treaty, according to Israeli embassy spokesman Shalom Tourgeman.

Jordan and Israel have already signed agreements on cooperation in tourism, health, energy, agriculture, maritime boundaries, trade, fight against drugs, environmental protection and border crossings and have drawn a draft accord on transport, seen as key to enhancing cooperation in most areas between the two neighbours.

Officials from both sides have said that differing interpretations and demands were holding up the finalisation of the agreement but the way could be cleared in a meeting between Mr. Peres and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Mr. Tourgeman was quoted as saying by the Associated Press that Mr. Peres, who will meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Thursday and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Friday, "will also discuss with King Hussein regional issues" ahead of the Dec. 11 White House meeting.

The Peres-Arafat meeting is to take place at the Erez crossing between Israel and the autonomous Gaza Strip. Nabil Abu Rudeina, an advisor to Mr. Arafat, said in Gaza.

Mr. Abu Rudeina said Mr. Arafat was also to have joined Mr. Peres and President Mubarak who are meeting in Cairo in Thursday.

Pakistan holds 'linchpins' of bombing

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Police believe they have arrested the linchpins behind the suicide bombing that devastated the Egyptian embassy and killed 17 people, Interior Minister Nasirullah Babaar said Monday.

The arrests Sunday of two Egyptians, including one believed to have financed the bombing, virtually wraps up the investigation," Mr. Babaar told the Associated Press.

"These two were the key figures in the bombing... they will know about 80 per cent of the details," he said without elaborating.

The pair were arrested in Pakistan's tribal frontier province which borders Afghanistan.

Mr. Babaar identified one of the two as Abu Abdul Rahman. The other, whose name was not available, apparently was arrested after he crossed the border into Pakistan from Afghanistan, police said.

Since the devastating bombing on Nov. 19 Mr. Babaar said, police have arrested key culprits, traced the vehicle used in the bombing, identified the group behind the attack, issued warrants for the arrest of Mohammad Ahmad — another key figure — and identified at least one of the two suicide bombers.

"Our intelligence agencies and police moved quickly," he said. "They have done a remarkable job in tracing the bombers and their associates."

Now Mr. Babaar said much of the work still remaining needs to be done in Egypt like identifying leaders of the Al Jihad group, the group responsible for the bombing.

Mr. Babaar also believes that several Egyptians who may have been involved in the planning of the bombing have fled the country and may be in Egypt.

Pakistan eventually will seek the extradition of Al Jihad leaders from Egypt, although no formal extradition request has been made, he said.

"The reason for the attack was directly connected to the battle between the Egyptian government and their militant opposition," said Mr. Babaar. "It had nothing to do with Pakistan..., but it happened on Pakistani soil and we want to try them here."

Al Jihad, along with another two Egyptian radical groups, took responsibility for the bombing.

With the help of the Egyptian government Pakistan identified Ahmad as a member of Al Jihad group. Police also prepared a sketch of Ahmad from descriptions given by the man who sold Ahmad the 1992 black Mazda double cabin truck.

He bought the truck for about $13,000 nearly two months before the devastating bombing.

Al Jihad was the group that claimed responsibility for the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat. It has taken credit for some of the more high profile attacks in recent years, particularly in Cairo.

Like other radical groups operating in Egypt, Al Jihad wants to overthrow the secular government of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and install a rigid Islamic government.

Scores of Egyptians came to Pakistan during the 1980s anti-communist insurgency in neighbouring Afghanistan. Many remained behind after rebels threw out the communists from Afghanistan in 1992.

Since signing the extradition treaty with Egypt about one year ago Pakistan has extradited nine Egyptians, say government officials here.

Ethiopian Jews struggle to become Israelis

By Dan Perry
The Associated Press

BEEROTAYIM, Israel — Beneath a shed of tree branches, dark-skinned men slaughter a cow with long knives. While flies and cats attack the carcass, they divide the meat among residents of this squalid trailer park.

"It's cheaper than buying meat from stores," said Avraham Hegos, 25, who was among thousands of Ethiopian Jews brought to Israel in 1991's "Operation Solomon."

That airlift was hailed as a manifestation of Zionism's humanitarian side, rescuing Jews from a land torn by civil war and poverty.

But despite extensive and unprecedented government aid, there are worries the 56,000 black Jews are becoming an underclass burdened by racial discrimination that drives them to live apart.

"Israelis say they like us, as long as we don't live next to them, with the smell of our foods and our African clothes," said Adisu Masala, an Ethiopian activist.

Community leaders say the Africans are becoming entrenched as the poorest, most segregated group in the Jewish state, their youth increasingly disaffected and elders unable to cope with modern society.

Sbula Mula, 23, a community activist who studies education at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, said that "unless something dramatic changes fast, the Ethiopian Jews will become a disaffected minority no different from the blacks in America."

The Ethiopians are eligible for generous government grants for home purchases. But the community lags badly in education and income.

Thousands still live in dismal mobile home sites like Berrotayim, which at 50 kilometres north of Tel Aviv is far from job centres and schools.

Mr. Hegos, who arrived in the 1991 airlift of 14,000 Ethiopians, works at an air-conditioner factory for the equivalent $800 a month, just above minimum wage.

Because he is unmarried, Mr. Hegos says he qualifies only for a small housing grant and therefore has few prospects for leaving the mobile home soon.

His neighbour Lior Maharat said he was "dying for boredom." Expelled for misbehaviour from a religious school, the 17-year-old is waiting for his army draft notice while living with his mother, father and seven brothers and sisters in a trailer that lacks a functioning bathroom.

"The worst thing is the Russians," he said, pointing across the only paved road in Beerotayim to another group of trailers housing immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

The groups never interact, except for occasional fistfights among youths, he said.

Alex Melnik, an 11-year-old on the Russian-speaking side, said he had trouble believing his dark-skinned neighbours were Jews at all. "They're very strange," he said, "and we don't like them very much."

Discovered in 1867 by French Jewish scholar Joseph Halevy, Ethiopia's Jews remained mostly isolated until former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin decided in the 1970s to press for their emigration to Israel.

Theories about their origins range from the conversion of an African tribe to them being descendants of King Solomon.

"When Israelis started to come over some decades ago, we ourselves couldn't believe there were Jews who aren't black," said Mr. Masala, the activist who heads the Ethiopian immigrants association. "But for millennia we dreamed of returning to Zion, and this was our chance, so we took it."

The community arrived first in trickles and then in two large airlifts — one in 1984 and a second in 1991. Virtually no Jews are believed to remain in Ethiopia.

Optimists say government statistics indicate the beginnings of integration.

Dorit Karlin, the government official responsible for the absorption of the Ethiopians, said more than 600 are in college, triple the number of two years ago.

More than half have bought homes with government grants of up to $120,000 for families, far more aid than available to other immigrants. There are several dozens Ethiopians serving as army officers and numerous cases of marriage between Ethiopian immigrants and other Israelis, Mr. Karlin said.

Immigration Minister Yair Tsaban said: "There has never been such a colossal effort to absorb immigrants. I regard it as a test of honour for Israel. But it will take more than a year, and more than a generation."

Mr. Tsaban conceded there are "cases of racism" against the Ethiopians.

"The biggest impediment to integration is skin colour. We see it all over the world, and it's the case here, too," he said in an interview.

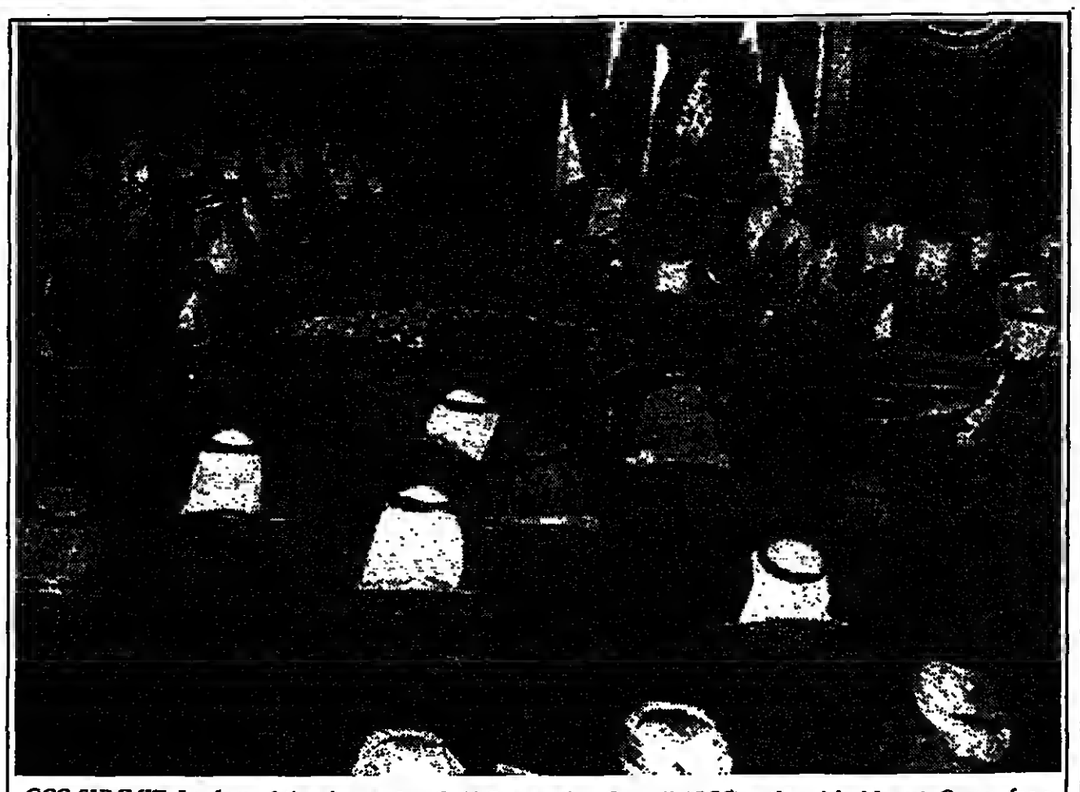
Micha Odenheimer, a U.S.-born activist for Ethiopian rights, said the government is failing in the primary challenge of helping Ethiopian children and teen-agers close to educational gap with Israeli-born contemporaries.

He noted that only seven per cent of those eligible completed high school entrance exams last year — by far the lowest proportion of any immigrant group in Israel. That is a virtual guarantee of a future as low-paid unskilled labourers.

Mr. Masala, the rights activist, contends Ethiopian children are assigned to the poorest boarding schools, often sharing them with delinquents. He says the schools, most of which are part of the state's special orthodox religious education system, actually alienate young Ethiopians from religion.

"A terrible generation gap has been created between the children who are moving away from our traditions, and their parents who are very religious and have difficulty with Israeli secular life," Mr. Masala said.

Jordan Times
Tel: 684311



GCC SUMMIT: Leaders of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) gathered in Muscat, Oman, for a three-day annual summit hosted by Oman's Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'id (see page one) (Reuter photo)

Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah is a man trusted by tribal and religious leaders

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah, who is standing in for the sick King Fahd at the Gulf summit in Muscat, is an austere man who is trusted by his country's tribal and religious leaders, diplomats said.

"Nobody questions his piety. He is the one most accepted by the Islamic opposition," a Western diplomat said, referring to the growth of opposition groups since the U.S.-led Gulf war to free Kuwait in 1991.

"Prince Abdullah is known for leading a more traditional lifestyle. He lives discreetly," another diplomat said, adding that the press here reports he meets often with the tribes and people in general.

Prince Abdullah, who is heading the Saudi delegation to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit in place of King Fahd who has been in the hospital since Thursday, was born in 1923 and has commanded the national guard since 1962.

This militia of between 25,000 and 35,000 men draw from bedouin tribes is tasked with monitoring strategic sites like oil fields, and is considered the rampart of the ruling Saud family.

Prince Abdullah is the 13th son of King Abdul Aziz, founder of the kingdom in 1932. His mother belongs to the Shammar, a powerful bedouin tribe which gave him military training after he was educated by Muslim clerics.

Prince Abdullah is untainted by corruption, a diplomat said, adding: "He is not among those who people denounce" when the subject is raised.

Suffering from a stammer, the prince appears little in public and "does not appear to be an experienced statesman," another diplomat said.

However, he has made several official visits abroad, and represented his country at the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Casablanca last year.

Prince Abdullah was named second vice president to the royal cabinet in 1975 when Khaled was appointed king, becoming the kingdom's third most powerful figure.

On Khaled's death in 1982, Fahd became king and Abdullah became crown prince.

According to the Arab press, Prince Abdullah and his half-brother Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz, minister of defence and aviation are frequent rivals.

Prince Sultan belongs to the Soudairi clan, which includes King Fahd and six other sons that King Abdul Aziz had with his favourite wife Hassa.

Also among the sons are Prince Nayef, the interior minister, and Prince Salman, the governor of Riyadh.

Prince Abdullah, who has no blood brothers, enjoys the trust of puritan religious leaders known as the ulema and the tribes of the Nejd, the country's harsh desert centre and home of the Al Saud.

In foreign policy, Prince Abdullah appears to have fewer links to the United States than the Soudairi clan and has more ties to the Arab countries.

Several sources said he expressed reservations over how quickly King Fahd called in U.S. troops after Iraq invaded Kuwait. Although he did not oppose the move, he argued that the religious leaders should have been prepared for it.

He successfully mediated a dispute between Syria and Jordan in 1980, and is considered the architect of the meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia, which paved the way for the end of the Lebanese civil war.

The prince suffered a "mild heart attack" in 1986, a Western diplomat said.

Chirac is still willing to meet Zeroual despite snub

COTONOU, Benin (R) — French President Jacques Chirac said on Sunday he was willing to meet newly elected Algerian President Liamine Zeroual, in spite of an earlier snub by Mr. Zeroual before the election.

"President Zeroual is the legitimate president of Algeria, and it would no problem for me (to meet him)," Mr. Chirac said in an interview with the international French-language satellite Television Channel TV5.

The French leader was in Benin for a summit of French-speaking countries.

"No one can contest the lawfulness of the election, the high rate of voter participation and the clear nature of President Zeroual's political victory," Mr. Chirac said.

"I believe this to be a first step — and probably a decisive one — towards peace and stability in Algeria. I am certain that all Algerians deeply hope, whatever the political divisions, for peace and stability."

Muslim fundamentalists and opposition parties urged a boycott of the presidential election last month but Algerian authorities said nearly 75 per cent of eligible voters cast ballots and Mr. Zeroual won 61 per cent of the vote.

The Algerian leader embarrassed Mr. Chirac just weeks before by cancelling a meeting with him at the United Nations in October, ostensibly because Mr. Chirac refused a photo session with him but mainly because Paris was putting unwelcome public pressure on him to talk to the opposition.

The snub was particularly embarrassing because the French leader faced criticism at home and in Algeria for agreeing to meet Mr. Zeroual in the first place.

Critics said their get-together would be interpreted as an endorsement of Mr. Zeroual's candidacy by France, Algeria's former colonial power.

About 40,000 people have died in civil strife in Algeria since the army intervened in 1992 to cancel a general election which the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front was on the verge of winning.

Rushdie thinks Iranian fatwa will be lifted in '96

WELLINGTON (AP) — Author Salman Rushdie, subject to an Iranian death sentence for six years, expects the edict to be lifted next year.

"I hope things are moving to the point where we can leave this nonsense within a year," Mr. Rushdie said Monday from a secret location in Wellington.

The Booker Prize-winning author has been hiding and living under police protection since the late Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini issued a death sentence against him. Mr. Rushdie was accused of blasphemy against Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses."

A police diplomatic protection squad took a reporter and photographer Monday to meet Mr. Rushdie at an undisclosed location.

There has been prolonged political pressure on Iran and Mr. Rushdie expected that country's leaders to be preparing for a full revocation of the fatwa.

"After six years it will take a while for Iran to make a complete turnaround," he said. "I am not surprised they are doing it by gradual degrees."

Iran gave the European Union (EU) an oral assurance in September it no longer sought Mr. Rushdie's death, but refused to commit the promise to paper.

"Until this year no Iranian leader had said such a thing," said Mr. Rushdie. "This year every single member of the leadership has said 'we don't plan to act in such an unpleasant way and, we never did.'"

"I wish they had said that six years ago."

Mr. Rushdie said any assurance would be treated with caution.

In New Zealand to promote "The Moor's Last Sigh," his first novel since the sentence was handed down, Mr. Rushdie said the book's promotion was a chance for him to move back into public life.

So far he has had no trouble.

"It felt great. I felt like I was rejoining the human race."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinian aid conference postponed

BRUSSELS (R) — An international conference in Paris to pledge aid to the Palestinians has been postponed by one month to Jan. 9, European Union diplomats said on Monday. "It has been announced that, for organisational reasons, the Paris pledging conference will now be held on Jan. 9 instead of Dec. 9," one said on the margins of a meeting of European Union foreign ministers. Diplomats explained that the Paris pledging conference had risked being buried under the welter of meetings on Bosnia set to take place in London, Paris, Bonn and Brussels over the next three weeks. "It was decided that it was therefore better to postpone the conference," one diplomat said.

Filipina maid not released in amnesty day

ABU DHABI (AP) — A teenage Filipina maid imprisoned for killing her employer was not as expected among convicts freed during weekend national day celebrations in the United Arab Emirates. Sarah Balabagan, 16, was sentenced to death in September for stabbing to death her 85-year-old employer who allegedly tried to rape her. A higher court revoked the sentence in October after the victim's family agreed to settle for blood money. She was instead sentenced to one year in jail and 100 lashes. She paid 150,000 dirhams ($41,000) in blood money. "There has been no indications that Sarah was among those pardoned by the president during the national day celebrations," said Danilo Cruz, labour attache at the Philippine embassy. He was referring to the release of 113 prisoners on Saturday during the UAE's 24th national day celebrations. Mr. Cruz, however said the embassy has not given up hope for an early release of Sarah and a waiver of the flogging.

Turkey to send up to 1,300 troops to Bosnia

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey said Monday that it would contribute upto 1,300 troops to the NATO-led force being set up to enforce a peace plan in war-torn Bosnia. "We will have a force in Bosnia whose size will be between 1,200 and 1,300 troops," foreign ministry spokesman Nurettin Nurkan told reporters. Mr. Nurkan, however, added that neither the location nor the exact task of the Turkish force had yet been determined. Turkey had contributed a 1,500-member unit to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia, whose mandate is to end in the coming weeks.

Lebanon seeks extradition from Sweden of suspect

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanon is seeking the extradition from Sweden of an alleged accomplice in the February 1994 bomb attack on a church north of Beirut that killed 11 people, legal officials said Monday. They said Sweden had detained Rafic Fuad Al Fahl, 34, on an international arrest warrant. Fahl, a member of the Lebanese Forces (LF) which has been disbanded since the bombing in Zouk Mikhail, is accused of involvement in the "planning and preparation of terrorist actions." The Justice Ministry is to hand over the extradition request for Fahl to go on trial in Beirut, the officials said. The prosecution in the case has called for Samir Geagea, former head of the LF, to be condemned to death. A death sentence passed against him in June, for the murder of rival Danny Chamoun in 1990, was commuted to life imprisonment.

Sudan allows limited relief flights

KHARTOUM (R) — The Sudanese government has eased its ban on relief flights to help victims of the civil war in southern Sudan, Khartoum newspapers said on Monday. The independent newspaper Al Rai Al Akhar said the government had given the United Nations permission to make four flights from the Kenyan town of Lokichokio to send food to "safe areas" in the south. It quoted a source at the government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission as saying the United Nations received the permission on Nov. 30 and had already run two of the flights, on Saturday and Sunday. The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) also has permission to operate for five days supplying cattle vaccines, school supplies and other provisions to southern Kordofan and the Bahr Al Ghazal area, the source added.

Kuwait's civil servants 'do an hour's work per day'

KUWAIT (AP) — Civil servants in super rich Kuwait are paid an average of nearly $17,000 a year but work for 60 minutes a day, costing $1.87 billion a year in wasted salaries. The findings, published by Al Siyasseh newspaper Monday, were given by Kuwait University law lecturer Ibrahim Al Humoud in a seminar on problems facing the government's privatisation plans. The emirate's 150,000 civil servants seek employment with the government because its pay is better than in the private sector and because of the vast benefits.

Turkey, Yugoslavia to normalise ties

ANKARA (AFP) — A Turkish diplomatic mission was in Belgrade Monday as part of a move to normalise ties between Ankara and the rump Yugoslavia, deeply strained by the crisis in Bosnia, the foreign ministry said Monday. Spokesman Nurettin Nurkan told reporters a Turkish team headed by Deputy Under-Secretary Ali Tuygan would be holding talks with Yugoslav counterparts. When asked if this was part of a process to normalise ties, Mr. Nurkan said, "this is basically right." It is the first time the two countries are holding official talks in one of their capitals since 1993, when they recalled their respective ambassadors in Belgrade and Ankara and reduced ties to the charge d'affaires level.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 ..... Captain Planet
14:30 ..... Earth Star Voyager
15:15 ..... Run the Gauntlet
16:00 The Adventures of the Black Stallion
16:30 ..... Sky Trackers
17:00 ..... Fractales
17:30 Serie — Fruits Et Legumes
18:00 ... Doc. — Savoir Plus Sante
19:00 ..... News in French
19:15 ..... Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30 ..... News Headlines
19:35 ..... You Bet Your Life
20:00 The Secret of the Treasure Island
20:25 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:10 ..... True Blue
22:00 ..... News in English
22:25 .... Feature film: "Bombers"
23:59 ..... Never Come Back

PRAYER TIMES

04:54 ..... Fajr
06:16 ..... *(Sunrise) Duha*
11:26 ..... Dhuhr
14:12 ..... 'Asr
16:36 ..... Maghreb
17:58 ..... 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swelleh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terranucia Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel.675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Relative cold weather conditions will prevail, with skies partly cloudy and a chance of scattered showers. Winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 4/13
Aqaba 11/ 22
Deserts 3/14
Jordan Valley ..... 9 / 21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 22, Humidity readings: Amman 80 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Issam Al Asmar 890504
Dr. Abdul Rahim Mustafa 744685
Dr. Khaldoun Asfour 666873
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qasu 281741
Alquds pharmacy ..... (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mallias, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ..... (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital ..... (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:50 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:30 ..... Damascus (RJ)
09:00 ..... Aqaba (RJ)
09:25 ..... Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:05 ..... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:05 ..... Beirut (RJ)
16:20 ..... Cairo (RJ)
17:15 ... Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:35 ..... London, Frankfurt (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:10 ..... Frankfurt (YP)
14:20 ..... Rome (AZ)
14:55 ..... Munich, Aleppo (YP)
17:30 ..... Dubai (EK)
20:10 ..... Beirut (ME)
23:30 ..... Aden (DY)
23:40 ..... Amsterdam (KL)
00:55 ..... Bucharest (RO)
01:10 ..... London (KJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 ..... Beirut (RJ)
06:30 ..... Aqaba (RJ)
08:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:00 ..... Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:05 ..... Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:45 ..... Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:00 ..... Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:05 ..... London (RJ)
12:15 ..... Cairo (RJ)
19:00 ..... Larnaca (RJ)
20:00 New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
20:35 ..... Jeddah (RJ)
20:45 ..... Damascus (RJ)
21:00 ..... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:05 ..... Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00 ..... Damascus, Paris (AF)
14:10 ..... Frankfurt (YP)
15:20 ..... Damascus (AZ)
15:45 ..... Munich (YP)
18:30 ..... Dubai (EK)
00:30 ..... Aden (DY)
00:40 ..... Amsterdam (KL)
01:55 ..... Bucharest (RO)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	700/ 500
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammar)	620
Cabbage	120 / 80
Carrot	280/200
Cauliflower	160/120
Cucumbers (large)	200 150
Cucumbers (small)	340 / 250
Eggplant	180/ 120
Garlic	750/600
Grape Fruit	220/150
Lemon	250/150
Marrow (large)	180/ 120
Marrow (small)	280 / 200
Olives	650/500
Onion (green)	220/150
Onion (dry)	230/ 150
Orange	480/250
Pepper (hot)	240 / 120
Pepper (sweet)	240/120
Potato	280/ 200
Radish	140/80
Spinach	160/100
String Beans	650 / 500
Tangerine	300/200
Tomato	290/200

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday inaugurates a new day care centre at Jordan's industrial estates (Petra photo)

Industrial estates establish day care centres

'Facilities to enable women to stay longer in the workforce'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma yesterday inaugurated two new day care centres at Jordan's industrial estates in Sahab and Irbid.

The facilities, a first in Jordan offered by employers to working women, are a joint effort between the industrial estates and the Jordan National Committee for Women (JNCW).

"We bope that this will be helpful in encouraging these factories to hire more women, and enable women to stay in the workforce," said Hiyam Kalimat, director of the JNCW.

The turnover of women employees at the industrial estates is high, she said.

"A survey (the JNCW) conducted at the estates sbowed that women employees stay, on average, only five years at these jobs," she added, whicb can often be attributed to the fact that facilities for married women with children are not available, in some cases forcing them to leave their jobs after they do have children.

"They simply cannot strike a balance between family and work responsibilities," she said, whicb begets a second problem.

"Employers (in Jordan) are sometimes reluctant to hire married women because they often leave. This will offer an alternative to leaving the workforce."

The problem of women and employment is particularly acute during periods of high national unemployment, she continued, which places additional burdens on women by making it that mucb more difficult for them to find or keep jobs.

The JNCW surveyed both industrial estates earlier this year to assess the need for the service.

Among 111 factories at Sahab, only 74 employ women, with women constituting 10 per cent of the total number of employees in 57 factories.

In the remaining 17 factories, women constitute just over 10 per cent of total employees.

In Irbid, only 19 companies out of a total of 54 located at the industrial estate there employ women, the survey sbowed.

In both cases, more than 50 per cent of married women with children wbo work at the indnstrial estates said they would like to bave a day care facility for their children at their place of employment.

"Most women now pay for day care elsewbere or leave children with their families," Mrs. Hikmat said, "but they did express to us that they prefer a facility where they have qualified staff, activities for children and access to health care."

Also, women wbo entrust their children to day care outside of the family incur substantial expense in comparison to their monthly salaries, she said.

The survey at the industrial estates found that nearly one quarter of women working in these establishments, on average, earned JD100 or less per month, but spent between JD10-30 on day care services.

In the new facilities, said Mrs. Hikmat, services will be offered on a sliding scale basis according to salary, but fees will not exceed JD 10-15, she said, whicb will cover approximately two-thirds of the operating costs of the facilities.

The estimated costs of establishing the service and facilities, upwards of JD 25,000, she said, have been covered mostly by the industrial estates and volunteer contribntions.

Both the Sahab and Irbid estates have contributed land to build a new facility oo unoccupied space in administrative quarters respectively and bave volunteered to do financial reports and pay staff salaries for the first year of operations.

"Their cooperation is a sign of change in attitude aboui women in the work force," said Mrs. Hikmat. "Some people really don't care—projects like this take time and energy."

"But these industries have set an example," she continued, "By showing that they value women's contribution enough to accomodate them. They also sbow that this can be done fairly easily without excuse."

Mrs. Hikmat said she has seen other indicators of a cbange in attitude towards hiring women and towards providing sucb a service.

In Irbid, she said, a public institution has expressed its desire to use the day care facility at the industrial estate uotil it can establish its own, and a new factory opening in Irbid also plans to employ 200 women, many of whom will need the service.

"It's a good sign—maybe things are cbanging," sbe said.

The JNCW has been instrumental in securing the implementation of the Jordan National Strategy for Women, whicb was adopted in 1993 and set as a main priority the incorporation of a greater number of women into the workforce by providing support services sucb as day care for children.

French company explores bilateral water management possibilities

AMMAN (J.T.) — The board cbairman of the Frencb company Lyonnaise Des Eaux, Gerome Monod beld a meeting in Amman Monday with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to look into areas of cooperation in water issues for the Kingdom.

Speaking after the meeting, whicb was attended by Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat, and Frencb Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Bajolet, Mr. Monod said there is good potential for Jordan and the French company to work on water-related issues within the framework of a bilateral protocol through financing from international organisations.

The two sides discussed bilateral cooperation in water management and ways for Jordan to benefit from French expertise in overcoming water-related problems, Mr. Monod said.

Mr. Moood, who is due to leave Jordan today, said talks with the concerned Jordanian authorities over the past two days were extremely useful.

He added that the visit bas allowed him and his five-member delegation to closely examine opportunities and areas for investment in the Kingdom.

In a statement to Jordan Television Mr. Monod said he visited water projects in Amman and Aqaba and discussed water issues and the development of waste water treatment plants with Mr. Irsheidat. Mr. Monod's visit overlapped with a visit by Frencb Defence Minister Charles Millon wbose two-day visit bere ending Sunday, saw the signing of a military cooperation agreement between both countries.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday receives French company director Gerome Monod to discuss water cooperation issues (Petra photo)

Society looks into food and safety issues

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Consumers Protection Society (JCPS) President Mobammed Obeidat and society members Monday met with Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif to discuss issues related to the safe consumption of agricultural and dairy products.

A society source told the Jordan Times that the meeting was beld following public complaints about the safety of certain food stuffs in the local market as well as to urge the ministry to undertake the distribution of information to citizens regarding the safe consumption of agricultural produce.

The source, speaking under condition of anonymity, said JCPS members offered to cooperate closely with the Ministry of Agriculture in awareness campaigns to the public and suggested that the ministry take a key role in cooperation with the ministries of supply and health in determining the fitness of various food items for human consumption. The food items are fresb meat, dairy and agricultural produce.

The minister was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying that several ministry departments are following up on questions related to imports and exports of food products.

Petra noted that the ministry provides agricultural extension services to local farmers and guidance in the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

Mr. Ben Tarif said meat imported from Europe and other countries is constantly subjected to strict examination by laboratories to ensure that their fitness for consumption in conformity with Jordanian and international specifications.

The minister and the society members agreed on intensifying efforts and increasing cooperation in all areas designed to ensure protection to the consumers.

Senior ministry officials were present at the meeting.

Four killed in carbon monoxide poisoning

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Four people were killed and one was listed in critical condition Monday after inhaling carbon monoxide in north Marka, according to police and Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials.

A CDD official told the Jordan Times that preliminary investigations indicated that the men "possibly suffocated."

The official said that the victims, all Egyptian nationals, went to sleep Sunday evening with wood burning in a barrel in their room to keep warm.

"There wasn't enough air circulating in the room, and the men were inhaling carbon monoxide," the CDD official said.

The official said that the men were discovered early Monday morning by their fellow workers wbo lived next door.

All five men were rushed to Marka Medical Centre. Four of the five were declared dead on arrival.

The fifth victim, Issam Ghali Khalil, 29, who was listed in critical condition, was transferred to Al Bashir Hospital.

The dead were identified by the CDD as Mansour Ghali, 22, Hana Aziz Abdul Malak, 25, Faraj Kamel Ghali, 28 and Fayez Jirjis Hanin.

Police contacted by the Jordan Times Monday declined releasing any information and said they were waiting for autopsy results to determine the real cause of the death.

CDD statistics of last year said 11 people died in similar incidents from inhaling carbon monoxide, and 280 people were injured in 231 reported incidents.

Last December, three Zarqa children were killed and their parents were in critical condition from carbon monoxide poisoning after leaving a lit kerosene beater in their small room in the Ojan area of Zarqa.

Jordan Television bas increased its public service messages this season, warning the public of the dangers of gas and kerosene beating units and bow to use them in a safe and efficient manner.

Local firm awarded JD 1.45m contract to build first phase of Jubilee school

AMMAN (J.T.) — A local firm Monday won a JD 1.45 million contract to carry out the first phase of the construction of the Jubilee School at its permanent location in Yajouz on the outskirts of Amman.

Under the terms of the agreement the firm will set up student living quarters, laboratories, a library, a restaurant, playgrounds and squares around the school, according to Ibrahim Badran, executive director of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) which sponsors the school.

Dr. Badran, who signed the contract with the local firm's general manager, Mikhail Deir said the contract also provides for the construction of the main building of the school.

Dr. Badran said the NHF will sign other contracts for the installation of electricity and other civil works and utilities at the school.

He said the school and its varions facilities are to be built on 121 dunums of land.

The Jubilee School, whicb opened its doors in 1993 at a temporay site in Abdoun, offers gifted students a unique learning experience in Jotdan and a curriculum based on their special needs, capabilities and experiences.

The advanced academic programme at the school meets the intellectual and creative needs of gifted students and challenges them to achieve their full potential, according to NHF.

Last month the Arab Bank donated JD 1.5 million to the Jubilee School and in October Japan made a donation of $97.955 in equipment for science laboratories at the school.

According to Dr. Badran, the entire project will cost around JD 12 million.

HCST to hold electronics conference

AMMAN (Petra) — The Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) is organising an international electronics conference on Dec. 17 in cooperation with New York City University and the Jordanian Institute for electric and electronic engineers.

A HCST statement said that university professors, researchers , academics and specialists in electronics from Jordan and abroad will take part in the five-day meeting to review 142 working papers dealing with electric and electronic engineering, telecommunications, informatics control systems and other relevant topics.

During the conference 10 seminars will be organised at the Royal Scientific Society, the Jordan Electricity Authority, the Ministry of Industry and Trade's Jordanian Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) and Philadelphia Hotel.

Leading American experts will be presenting lectures during the meetings on internet services and computer systems.

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURES

• "Decouverte de L'Orient par les Biblistes fin du Dixieme Siecle" by Pere Sigrist at the French Cultural Centre at 6.00 p.m.

• "The Cousin of Juhha in Germany and Turkey" (in German with translation in Arabic) by Dr. D. Glade at Mu'ta University, Irbid, at 11.00 a.m.

POETRY RECITAL

• Recital of poems by several poets at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 6.00 p.m.

SHORT STORY RECITAL

• Recital of short stories by Suhair Al Tal at the Phoenix Gallery, Gardens St., at 6.00 p.m.

FILMS

• "Danny the Champion of the World" at the British Council at 7.00 p.m.

• "Saura" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman at 5.00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

• Photography by poet Ibrahim Nasrallah entitled "The Autobiography of an Eye" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh.

• Photograph exhibition "Biblical Itineraries" at the French Cultural Centre.

• Abstract art by Lucy Marto, Janine Saaf, and Tete Wegelius at the Royal Cultural Centre.

• Abstract art by Abdul Raheem Wakid at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman (Until Dec. 6).

• Sculptures & paintings by Iraqi Artist Ismail Fattah, at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Amman to host '97 Euro-Med conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman will play host to the European Union (EU) and the Mediterranean Cities Conference in 1997, according to Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi. Mr. Abbadi, who returned to Amman Sunday, after participating in the Euro-Med Cities Conference which concluded in Spain recently, said Amman will host the next conference in view of Jordan's pioneering role in the region. Participants in the Barcelona conference, according to Mr. Abbadi, have agreed to set up a general secretariat to follow up the implementation of agreements reached at the conference. He said the secretariat includes as members representatives of several cities, including Amman, Algiers, Barcelona, Jericho, Marseille, Nicosia, Rome, Sarajevo, Tunis and Cairo. He added that working groups were also formed to follow up the implementation of issues pertaining to cultural exchange, migration, tourism, transport, the environment and health.

Ministry denies Iraqi companies liquidation deadline

AMMAN (Petra) — An official source at the Ministry of Industry and Trade on Monday denied news reports publisbed by some local newspapers recently saying the government gave owners of some Iraqi companies or companies witb Iraqi shareholders a deadline to liquidate their businesses in Jordan. Saying such reports were baseless, the official source also denied that the ministry issued official memoranda warning companies and offices exporting commodities to Iraq. The source added that the ministry does not discriminate between Arab businessmen wbo invest in the Kingdom in accordance with the investment promotion law.

Lower House to hear state fiscal budget speech

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament will hold a meeting Wednesday morning to hear a speecb by Minister of Finance Basel Jardaneb on the state fiscal budget and to refer the budget law to the finance committee. The house, holding its second meeting after the start of the 3rd parliamentary session opened by His Majesty King Hussein Saturday, will elect its permanent finance, judiciary, administrative and foreign affairs committees. The House will also decide on any other committees it will form. In earlier sessions, the house set up committees specialised in public freedoms and citizens rights, health and the environment, education, Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, the countryside and badia, water and energy.

Minister opens five new schools

SALT (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh visited Balqa governorate Monday to open five new schools.

The schools, which are located in the towns of Fuheis, Rumeimin, Salhouh and Suleihi, together cost JD 2.34 million to build.

The minister was briefed on the educational situation, educational needs and the various facilities of the new schools.

The minister later opened a teachers' club in Salt and met with local teachers.

The teachers underlined the importance of the club in the promotion of the profession's performance and in helping teachers cooperate in their duties.

At the Salt vocational school for boys, the minister met with educationists and discussed several issues on the educational process in Jordan.

At the meeting, Mr. Rawabdeh pointed out the rapid changes in the field of education which, he said, makes it incumbent on the ministry and the concerned educational institutions to continually revise the country's educational system with a view to introducing improvements and modernisation.

3 die in Chechen car bomb attack

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — A car bomb exploded in the Chechen capital Monday near Russian administrative offices, killing at least three people and wounding several others.

Police sealed off the area after the explosion, which occurred about 20 metres from the offices of the Russian Territorial Government and Chechenya's pro-Russian administration, an AFP correspondent on the scene said.

Two of the dead were women. Around a dozen people were wounded in the blast said health officials, who warned the toll could rise.

Late last month, two similar attacks left several people wounded in central Grozny, including one which targeted the head of the pro-Russian government, Doku Zavgayev. A third car bomb was defused by security forces.

Heavy firing was heard in the centre of the Chechen capital Grozny late Sunday near the headquarters of the Russian-backed government, Interfax News Agency reported.

Since pro-Russian authorities announced that an election would be held on Dec. 17 to choose a new head of government, Chechenya has witnessed an upsurge of violence. Separatists have promised to boycott the poll unless Russian troops leave.

Interfax quoted informed military sources as saying that hand-held infantry weapons, large-calibre machine-guns and mortars were used in the overnight firefight.

"The source suggested that shooting methods used do not resemble an attempt to fend off an ordinary attack of a small group of militants on a checkpoint," the agency said.

The situation in Chechenya remains unstable despite the signature of a cease-fire accord last June between separatists and Russian forces who took control of most of the Caucasus republic after invading nearly a year ago.

A follow-up agreement providing for the departure of Russian forces in exchange for the disarmament of the Chechens has yet to be implemented.

Between 30,000 and 50,000 people, mostly civilians, are estimated to have died in the six months of heavy fighting between the Russian intervention and the ceasefire.

On Sunday, Russian presidential envoy Oleg Lobov said Chechenya would be granted a special status within the Russian Federation under a draft accord currently being drawn up for the Caucasus republic.

He said the draft settlement would give Chechen authorities direct rule over affairs of state as well as devolving a large degree of power over trade relations to the republic.

Moscow would, however, maintain control over the war-wracked republic's monetary system, its army and its borders, Mr. Lobov said.

Chechen separatists, who declared independence from Moscow four years ago, have demanded the republic be allowed to secede from the Russian Federation, but Russia will only countenance a limited degree of autonomy.

The draft settlement would give Chechenya a similar constitutional status to that already enjoyed by Tatarstan following an accord signed in early 1994 which appeared to satisfy the demands of separatist Tatars.

In another conciliatory sign, Mr. Zavgayev said Sunday that Chechen independence fighters could obtain an amnesty if they hand in their weapons and report to a new commission set up by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Mr. Zavgayev told a news conference in Grozny that the move was "a further step to restoring harmony in Chechenya" after the conflict.

60 dead in Cameroon plane crash

DOUALA, Cameroon (R) — About 60 of 77 passengers and crew were killed when a Cameroon airliner crashed into a mangrove swamp as it attempted to land in the central African country's commercial capital Douala, airline officials said Monday.

Fishermen in dugout canoes were the first to reach the wreckage of the Boeing 737, which came down in the swamp in pitch darkness, complicating rescue efforts.

"Rescuers, essentially fishermen, did not reach the disaster site until an hour after the crash," said an airline official, who put the crash time at about 10 p.m. (2100 GMT) Sunday.

Airline staff said several people were still unaccounted for.

The army, joining the rescue effort, pulled out seven people alive, among them the pilot, co-pilot and a stewardess.

Reporters saw five of the survivors, including the stewardess, at one of two local clinics in the port city where the casualties were taken in critical condition.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known but airport officials said the pilot first tried to land then aborted the attempt, apparently due to problems with the undercarriage.

A government statement said the passengers were mostly nationals of Cameroon, Benin and Nigeria but also included a number of Europeans.

It added that Transport Minister Issa Tchiroma Bakary had left for Douala in the wake of the crash, Cameroon's worst aviation disaster.

The plane was on a scheduled flight from the Benin town of Cotonou and was due to continue from Douala to the political capital Yaounde and to Garoua in the extreme north.

A privately-owned helicopter hovered above the crash site about five kilometres from the runway, directing a beam of light over the swamp to help rescuers.

Cotonou, Benin's most important city, where the plane began its return flight, is playing host to heads of state of 47 countries attending a summit of French speakers, which ends officially later Monday. There was no indication that any dignitaries from the summit were on the flight.

Cameroon Airlines, a national carrier, is one of the few companies offering regular passenger services across west Africa, with enormous demand for its limited number of aircraft.

The condition of aircraft serving west Africa is a growing concern for many travellers but Cameroon Airlines has had a comparatively satisfactory record.

However, in September a Boeing 747 serving its most prestigious route — Douala-Paris — developed engine trouble as it approached the French city. The pilot managed to land safely.

Former Mexican president goes on offensive, says he will testify

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Former President Carlos Salinas De Gortari, angered by what he calls a campaign to make him Mexico's "favourite villain," has promised to testify about his administration and his brother's legal problems.

With a signed, nine-page letter, the reclusive Salinas went on the offensive Sunday for the first time since leaving fiscally battered Mexico in March. Written after a week of bruising allegations against his brother, the letter signaled Mr. Salinas' willingness to fight for his reputation and his place in history.

After leaving Mexico, "I had decided to say absolutely nothing about what was written about me," Mr. Salinas wrote in the letter, faxed by his private office to news organisations late Sunday.

"But in the face of leaks and the rumours," he said, "I emphatically declare: I am willing, as I have always been, to testify and make myself available for any clarification, including of a legal character."

It was not immediately clear when Mr. Salinas, now believed to be living in Canada, would return to Mexico to testify.

The man many once considered Mexico's greatest president left his homeland nine months ago, shaken by his brother Raul's arrest on murder charges and growing criticism of his own role in the country's economic crisis.

Mr. Salinas has been widely blamed for the devaluation of the peso, which plunged the country into recession three weeks after he left office one year ago.

The criticism of his administration grew in February, when Raul Salinas was arrested and accused of masterminding the murder of their sister's ex-husband — Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu, the No. 2 man in the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI. Raul Salinas denies the charge; Carlos Salinas has not been implicated in the murder.

Mr. Salinas left the country after staging a bizarre hunger strike in the northern industrial city of Monterrey to protest his brother's arrest.

The criticism faded for a time, then returned last week with the disclosure that Raul Salinas, a former government employee, had Swiss bank accounts totaling $84 million.

Many of the former president's political allies in the PRI have joined the attack, with the party's national leaders discussing whether to expel the Salinas brothers from the party. Last week, opposition politicians filed formal complaints with the Mexican Congress, demanding the lower house try him for his role in Mexico's economic crisis.

New killings reported in Rwanda

KIGALI (R) — Armed men in uniform killed 20 Rwandans, mostly women and children, in a settlement in the southwestern Nyungwe Forest, scene of an extremist Hutu insurgency, U.N. human rights officials said Monday.

Spokesman Lee Woodyear of the U.N. Human Rights Operation in Rwanda, said the Defence Ministry was investigating the killings which took place early on Nov. 25.

Human rights observers saw some 20 bodies in the area including nine women and seven children, Mr. Woodyear said. There were other bodies dumped in a river and nearby hills according to accounts from witnesses, he added.

The identities of the killers and the motivation behind the attack are not known, Mr. Woodyear said.

U.N. officials said the victims appeared to be internally displaced Hutus from the southwestern Kibeho camp where hundreds of refugees were killed in an attack in April by soldiers of Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated army.

Defence Ministry spokesman Jean-Marie Jabo said he had no information on the killings.

Areas bordering Zaire in southwestern and northwestern Rwanda are hit by an insurgency campaign by militias of the Hutu majority, based in refugee camps in eastern Zaire.

The Hutu militias and members of Rwanda's defeated former government army were responsible for last year's genocide of up to a million ethnic Tutsis and allied Hutus.

They fled to Zaire and Tanzania together with two million Hutu refugees after Tutsi-led rebels swept to power last July.

The rebels, who in recent months have stepped up their attacks inside Rwanda, were dealt a big blow early in November after the Rwandan army attacked their base on Iwawa, a small island on Lake Kivu.

Government soldiers killed several hundred members of the former government army and militias in the raid on Iwawa, Rwandan officials said.

Opposition vows to resist Bangladesh election

DHAKA (AP) — Opposition parties threatened Monday to boycott next month's general elections and announced fresh street protests and strikes.

The opposition claimed the election will not be fair if it is conducted by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government, and demanded that she step aside in favour of a neutral figure.

The Election Commission announced Sunday the vote will be held on Jan. 18.

A widespread boycott would cast doubt on the legitimacy of the voting and deepen the political crisis that has preoccupied Bangladesh for nearly two years.

Mrs. Khaleda was elected five years ago in the country's first peaceful transfer of power since independence in 1971. It followed the ouster of former President Hussain Mohammad Ershad by a popular pro-democracy uprising.

As the date of the election was released Sunday, political violence flared in several parts of the country.

One person was killed and 60 injured in a clash between supporters of the ruling Bangladesh National Party and of the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-E-Islami party in Laxmipur, a town 120 kilometres north of Dhaka, police said.

In Dhaka, supporters of former President Ershad, who is in jail for corruption during his eight years in office, smashed a dozen cars, police said.

Unidentified assailants hurled firebombs at the homes of two junior ministers, police said. One child, the son of a staff member who was playing on the lawn, was injured.

The Awami League, the largest opposition party, and its two opposition allies said they will hold street protests this weekend and a 72-hour nationwide strike beginning Dec. 9.

"This is our initial programme to resist the elections. We will announce more such protests if the government does not resign before the elections," Sheikh Hasina, the leader of the Awami League, told reporters.

"We can't participate in any election held under the supervision of Mrs. Khaleda Zia, because this will mean roasting ourselves in hell," said Mrs. Hasina.

The elections were announced without resolving the political impasse between the government and opposition on who should conduct the voting, she said. The opposition parties accuse Mrs. Khaleda of corruption and incompetence.

A South Korean man, with a picket carrying the portraits of former Presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae-woo, and the incumbent state leader, Kim Young-Sam, stage a protest with another picket showing Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh alone, on a main street in Seoul. About 50 protesters from a nationwide dissident group took part in the street demonstration to demand Mr. Kim's government launch a special prosecution team to probe into a 1979 military coup and the 1980 massacre of a pro-democracy revolt, both led by Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh (Reuter photo)

Seoul prosecutors to quiz generals over 1979 coup

SEOUL (R) — South Korean state prosecutors building a case of military rebellion against ex-President Chun Doo Hwan over a 1979 coup and a later massacre questioned a former defence minister Monday.

They also interviewed a one-time Seoul military police chief and drew up a long list of retired military top brass they want to question as they widened their inquiry, a prosecution official said.

There were conflicting reports over whether Mr. Chun was cooperating with the inquiry into the coup that helped turn him from an ambitious young officer into president in 1980.

Mr. Chun, arrested and detained in anyang prison Sunday, was said to be not adjusting well to his new life behind bars.

"Former Defence Minister Noh Jae-Hyun and the retired military chief of police Cho Hong are being questioned," senior prosecutor Lee Jong-Chan told reporters. Mr. Noh was defence minister from 1977-79.

Prosecutors also visited the Seoul Detention Centre to interrogate former President Roh Tae-Woo, marking his 63rd birthday Monday, over the coup and massacre.

Mr. Roh will be indicted Tuesday on unrelated bribery charges. The former general has confessed to amassing a $654 million slush fund during his 1988-93 term in office.

News reports said prosecutors planned to quiz more than 30 military officials to piece together the events that led to the slaughter of an officially estimated 192 civilians in the southern city of Kwangju in May 1980.

Local residents say thousands were killed when crack paratroopers stormed their city to put down a citizens' revolt against martial law.

The domestic Yonhap News Agency said evidence from the retired brass was needed because Mr. Chun "strongly denied having played a role in the rebellion during questioning in his prison cell". State radio said he was cooperating.

Mr. Chun was questioned for more than 10 hours Sunday after he was snatched from his home of Hapcheon, 240 kilometres south of Seoul, by prosecution officials sent to arrest him.

Yonhap quoted wardens as saying Mr. Chun, who is in a private cell with a 24-hour guard at the door, was finding it difficult to cope with prison life.

"In the case of Mr Roh Tae-Woo in the Seoul Detention Centre, I heard he was adapting quite well there, but Mr Chun is not adapting that well," Yonhap quoted a guard as saying.

Mr. Chun's lawyer visited him Monday but details were not available.

On Saturday Mr. Chun ignored a prosecution summons, made a public attack on President Kim Young-Sam and told reporters he would have nothing to do with the inquiry. He said he had already submitted written statements to questions by prosecutors during their earlier probes.

Mr. Chun, 64, could face the death penalty if convicted of mutiny.

During the Kwangju assault Mr. Chun was effectively running the country as head of a group of young officers who seized military power from acting President Choi Kyu-Hah, installed after Park Chung-Hee was assassinated.

Senior prosecutor Lee said prosecutors were contacting Mr. Choi's family and aides to try to cajole the 76-year-old ex-president into appearing for questioning.

Yonhap quoted Mr. Choi's secretary as saying Mr. Choi would not present himself for questioning because of ill health.

Earlier this year prosecutors dropped an inquiry against Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh over the 1979 coup and Kwangju massacre, citing a need for national unity.

But President Kim Young-Sam last month ordered a special law to punish his two predecessors.

Communist leader courts military

MOSCOW (AP) — Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov courted the military vote Monday, winning applause from an audience of officers for criticising government policies he said have wrecked the Russian army.

Mr. Zyuganov told officers at a conference organised by the Communist Party on military policies that Boris Yeltsin's government had no clear vision of the army's role in post-Soviet Russia.

He promised to revise Russia's military doctrine, improve conditions for servicemen and fund defence plants, and was critical of the war in Chechenya.

"They (Yeltsin's government) are trying to use the army for unclear goals," Mr. Zyuganov told reporters before the conference began.

He reminded the several hundred people in attendance, including civilian military advisers, of the greatness of the Soviet army and pledged to restore the strength of Russia's armed forces.

The military vote is one of the most important in Russia. It includes millions of people, including active duty soldiers and their families, employees in military industries and retired servicemen.

Mr. Zyuganov has visited a number of military bases and academies as well as defence plants as he criss-crosses Russia in his quest for votes in Dec. 17 parliamentary elections.

Many servicemen are disgruntled with their pay, with corruption in the higher ranks and with the use of the army in internal conflicts.

Like many of the leading parties, the Communists are fielding candidates from the military.

The Communists are leading in the polls and could emerge as the strongest faction in parliament after the December vote.

Mr. Zyuganov said he opposed the eastward expansion of NATO and the formation of any new military blocs.

Doubts cast over new role for Diana

LONDON (R) — British government ministers have cast doubts on whether Princess Diana could be given a formal role as an ambassador for Britain as she has asked, the Times newspaper reported.

Buckingham Palace confirmed over the weekend that top officials had held talks with Princess Diana, estranged wife of heir to the throne Prince Charles, over her role.

In a television interview last month in which she surprised the world by confessing to adultery, Princess Diana also said she did not want to be queen but would like to become a sort of goodwill ambassador for Britain.

The Times newspaper, in its Monday edition, quoted ministers as saying this was unlikely. "We could not trust her with a brief," a "senior minister" was quoted as saying.

Another government source said Princess Diana, who recently returned from an official visit to Argentina, could continue such work, but he doubted whether this would be made into something more structured.

An opinion poll for the Sunday Times newspaper showed that Princess Diana had pulled off a public relations coup with her television interview.

Her public sympathy rating jumped from 27 per cent before the interview to 39 per cent now. Prince Charles's sank from 10 to eight per cent.

Princess Diana boosted her public image further Sunday with an interview revealing that she pays late-night visits to hospitals to comfort the seriously ill.

"There are hundreds of patients who are there without their own loved ones and need a human presence," she told the News Of The World newspaper. "I really love helping. I seem to draw strength from them."

Jodie Foster targeted by death threats on Internet

LOS ANGELES (R) — American actress Jodie Foster has been targeted with death threats and other explicit messages on the Internet, Hollywood trade newspaper daily Variety reported in its Monday edition. Daily Variety said the FBI had been asked to investigate threats against the two-time Academy Award winner. The messages detailed explicit plans for attacking and murdering Foster and also described imaginary sexual encounters, the paper said. They were posted in a "chat room" operated by the Hollywood network, a worldwide web site based in the Los Angeles suburb of Beverly Hills. The site's founder, Carlos De Abreu, shut down the chat room and sent copies of the material to the Los Angeles office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and to Foster's representatives, the paper said. Neither the FBI nor Foster were available for comment Sunday. In March 1981, crazed fan John Hinckley tried to impress Foster by carrying out an assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. She has not discussed the incident since. Daily Variety said the Hollywood network would install software to keep better track of users, a move it admitted would offend many Internet users who zealously guard the right of free speech on the information superhighway. "It's a question of, what do you do in this live environment that's appealing and interesting, while at the same time, how do you monitor the situation for content that's inappropriate?," Mr. De Abreu was quoted as saying.

Beer Lovers invite Jackson to poll campaign

MOSCOW (AP) — The Beer Lovers Party, seeking to boost their popularity with young voters, wants pop star Michael Jackson to come to Moscow and perform for their parliamentary election campaign. Konstantin Kalachyov, the party's secretary general, told the Interfax News Agency Sunday they have invited Jackson to come to Russia in the last days of the campaign for the Dec. 17 parliament elections. They are prepared to pay 80 million rubles ($17,500) to finance a tour by Jackson, Mr. Kalachyov said. With more than 40 parties, blocs and movements, and more than 5,000 candidates in the race for the Dec. 17 parliamentary elections, politicians are making every effort to attract voters, especially the disaffected young. Earlier this month, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's Our Home is Russia sought to rally the youth vote by sponsoring concerts by rapper MC Hammer and guitarist Glenn Hughes, a former member of the band Deep Purple.

Judge drops charges against Paradis

MONTREAL (AP) — A judge has dropped hashish possession charges against French singer and actress Vanessa Paradis, who had been arrested at Montreal's airport in February. Paradis did not appear in Quebec court for the scheduled start of her trial. Noting that Paradis, 22, had no criminal record, Judge Jean Sirois agreed to a suggestion by prosecutors and defence lawyers that charges be dropped. Paradis, who has performed in several films and in Chanel perfume ads, had already contributed $370 to a charity for handicapped children in Quebec. She was taken into custody at Dorval Airport on Feb. 22 while on a three-day tour promoting one of her movies.

Victorious Sri Lankan soldiers march through the suburbs of the Tamil Tiger rebel stronghold of Jaffna. Most of the town is now under army control after six weeks of heavy fighting against the guerrillas (Reuter photo)

Big blast mars Sri Lankan army victory in Jaffna

COLOMBO (AFP) — A massive explosion Monday devastated the main government building in Sri Lanka's north, marring a spectacular army victory over Tamil guerrillas in their former citadel of Jaffna, officials said.

The deafening blast ripped through the landmark two-storey district secretariat in Jaffna City, causing the office block to crumble, but no one was injured, military officials here said.

"It was a massive explosion," a military spokesman said, adding that troops were lonking for booby traps when the building blew up.

"The initial suspicion is that a large quantity of explosives was packed inside the ceiling."

The secretariat is the symbol of government authority in Jaffna, which was captured by troops from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on the 47th day of Sri Lanka's biggest military offensive.

The building's Tamil staff had fled weeks ago along with Jaffna's tens of thousands of residents, escaping the bitter fighting between the army and LTTE, whose sprawling de facto state was headquartered in the town.

Army commanders Sunday raised the Sri Lankan flag at the Dutch-built Jaffna Fort for the first time since 1990, and were celebrating their decisive victory over the Tigers when the explosion occurred.

The LTTE has been accused of rigging up scores of houses and buildings in Jaffna with explosives which have brought down several concrete structures and killed or injured an unspecified number of soldiers.

Fighting, however, died down in Jaffna and the rest of the region Monday after nearly 50 days of the army offensive, which claimed the lives of at least 508 troops and 1,925 rebels.

Military officials said the army was clearing Jaffna buildings one by one, searching for hidden explosives and weapons and surviving LTTE fighters, many of whom drifted away after threatening to fight to the last man.

A senior army commander, Major General Rohan Daluwatte, said in remarks published Monday that the Tiger leadership had fled Jaffna, leaving behind only "inexperienced young cadres" to face the army.

"The security forces have secured a major victory for a lasting peace," a Sri Lankan minister said here Sunday in the first official reaction to Jaffna's fall, which has punctured the LTTE's image of invincibility.

Housing Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva also called for volunteers to help with rehabilitation work in Jaffna, where several buildings have been destroyed.

The military drive forced thousands of Tamils to flee Jaffna in fear. Most of the refugees are reportedly living in overcrowded camps in the south of Jaffna peninsula and in the Sri Lankan mainland.

Hundreds of the refugees detained in the government-held northern town of Vavuniya for suspected links with the LTTE have been allowed to reunite with relatives in the rest of the country, relief agencies said.

Some 100 people remained at a transit centre pending verification of their identities, aid workers added. Vavuniya, about 254 kilometres north of here, is Colombo's last frontier post beyond which lies LTTE territory.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga — for whom the Jaffna battle had become a matter of prestige after the Tigers abrubtly pulled out of peace talks in April ending a six-month truce — has not commented on the military victory.

LTTE founder-leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, the country's most wanted man, has vowed to fight on, and said there could be no return to peace talks as long as Jaffna remained under Colombo's control.

Meanwhile Tamil leaders and analysts said Monday the fall of Jaffna must not distract President Kumaratunga from her promise to find a political solution to the protracted ethnic crisis.

Jaffna's fall would be a feather in the cap of Mrs. Kumaratunga and her government sitting in the Sinhalese-majority south, the analysts said.

But the Hindu Rig Veda religious text says that "he who rides the Tiger cannot dismount" and some Tamils fear Mrs. Kumaratunga may not take the hint when it comes to fighting the LTTE.

Douglas Devananda, leader of the once-militant Eelam People's Democratic Party which now has nine seats in parliament, said he supported the push against the LTTE but not at the expense of the president's devolution proposals.

"The Tamil-speaking people should be liberated with dignity and with an honourable political solution," he said.

"The president has to go ahead with a political solution because local and international opinion won't allow her to break her promises."

A spokesman for the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front, which has five seats in parliament, said it was difficult to judge the public mood in the south. But he pinned hopes on government pledges that it does not want to deviate from the political process.

"To the extent the government believes its standing in the south has been strengthened by apparent successes in the north may give it confidence," he said.

"But the president has repeated she believes a political solution is the ultimate solution. I hope it will be done quickly.

"Tamil political parties have been extremely unhappy with the linking of the military and political approach. The political approach should be linked to Tamil entitlements, not to other considerations."

The LTTE have proved themselves masters of guerrilla warfare, attacking prime targets in Colombo at will. If the army takes Jaffna and stays put, the town would become easy prey for more of the same, an Asian diplomat said recently.

"The president has got to get back some time to the negotiating table, but at the moment she has no choice but to continue with the war."

Clinton visit was a 'kiss of life' for Irish peace — Sinn Fein

BELFAST (R) — A leading Irish Republican said Monday President Bill Clinton's Northern Ireland visit last week had given the "kiss of life" to the peace process there.

Mr. Clinton was given a rapturous welcome when he became the first serving U.S. president to visit Belfast and Londonderry, urging both Catholics and Protestants to keep working for a permanent peace in Northern Ireland.

"The visit has given the kiss of life to the peace process," Mitchell McLaughlin, chairman of Sinn Fein, told BBC Radio.

"It was in dire straits and real danger of total collapse last week but we have been given more time and let us move urgently to try to take full advantage of it."

Sinn Fein is the political wing of the IRA, which had been fighting a guerrilla war against British rule in Northern Ireland until a ceasefire was declared 15 months ago.

Mr. Clinton's visit, meeting ordinary people and politicians on all sides of the conflict, sliced through the deadlock caused by Britain's insistence that the IRA must hand over its weapons before joining all-party peace talks.

Britain and Ireland have now agreed to set up an international commission headed by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell to look at guerrilla disarmament.

They have also invited all Northern Ireland political parties to preliminary talks leading to full-scale negotiations by the end of February.

Northern Ireland has enjoyed 15 months of peace since Protestant and Republican guerrillas declared ceasefires in 1994 in their struggle over British rule.

Huge crowds greeted Mr. Clinton on his visit, which included walkabouts, formal dinners and turning on the Christmas lights in Belfast.

Meanwhile Protestant extremists rejected an appeal Sunday to start handing in their arms to kick-start peace efforts, a politician close to guerrilla groups said.

David Trimble, leader of the pro-British Ulster Unionist Party, had earlier called on the "loyalist" armed groups to begin surrendering their weapons.

The British government has been demanding that guerrillas on both sides, including the Irish Republican Army (IRA), give up arms before they can join peace talks.

Mr. Trimble said the Protestant groups, which profess "loyalty" to Britain, could pre-empt the IRA.

"If only the loyalist paramilitaries (guerrillas) would move even without waiting for the IRA, then I think that would deprive the IRA of any possible scintilla of a justification for holding on to their weapons," he told BBC Television.

Gary McMichael of the Ulster Democratic Party, which has close links to Protestant armed groups, rejected Mr. Trimble's idea, saying there was no question of a surrender of arms.

"Mr Trimble's approach was discussed, but discounted immediately," Mr. McMichael said.

"It was seen as an attempt to try and manipulate the paramilitary (guerrilla) organisations. They have had enough bitter experiences of that in the past, and they were not prepared to fall into another trap."

David Ervine, spokesman for the Progressive Unionist Party, another group with ties to Protestant guerrillas, told Independent Television News that loyalists had already done enough. "The ball is firmly in the court of the IRA," he said.

Gerry Adams, leader of the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein, welcomed Mr. Trimble's suggestions. But he repeated Sinn Fein demands that the British military and the Protestant-dominated police also give up arms.

"We want to see all of the guns — the British ones, the Republican ones, the loyalist ones, the licensed ones, the ones in the hands of the (police) — we want all of those guns taken out of Irish politics," he told Irish Radio.

Peace efforts have been stalled since the IRA and Protestant gunmen declared ceasefires late in 1994, following a 25-year campaign by the IRA to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

Angola's UNITA accuses government of new attack

LUANDA (R) — Angola's rebel UNITA movement accused the government Monday of attacking its troops in the north of the country in violation of a year-old peace accord.

Isaias Samakuva, UNITA's representative on the Joint Peace Commission monitoring the implementation of the accord, told Angolan state radio the government had seized three areas held by UNITA in the north.

"It happens that exactly last Wednesday when the quartering troop process started at Vila Nova, the government forces began an offensive in the northern province of Zaire which continued in the direction to Quicaba and Sumba culminating yesterday (Sunday), conquering three of our positions including Quinzau.

"(Yet) the quartering process demands that the government forces will not progress to the quartering areas of our troops," Mr. Samakuva said.

Under the peace accord signed in November last year, 15 assembly camps have been established for UNITA where troops are to be disarmed and registered before they are demobilised or absorbed into the Angola army.

Under the peace accord, the assembly camps are referred to as quartering areas.

Mr. Samakuva said the government attacks and assembly process would top the agenda of the Joint Peace Commission, due to meet in Luanda later Monday.

"I believe that these matters will take special attention at the Joint Commission meeting. We have informed the government and the United Nations' mission," Mr. Samakuva said.

The U.N. special representive to Angola, Alioune Blondin Beye, met President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos and UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi last week to try to solve the delays in assembling troops in the camps.

Mr. Beye said he was optimistic progress had been made.

Despite the peace accord, UNITA and the government are deeply suspicions of each other and there have been dozens of ceasefire violations, although mostly on a limited scale.

Several thousand U.N. peacekeepers are helping underpin the fragile peace in Angola, where tens of thousands of people were killed and millions displaced by the war which erupted on independence from Portugal in 1975.

Powerful quake hits Russia's Kuril Islands

WASHINGTON (R) — A powerful earthquake measuring 8.0 on the Richter Scale struck Russia's Kuril Islands north of Japan Sunday, but there were no immediate reports of deaths or damage, the U.S. National Earthquake Centre said.

Centre spokesman John Minsch said the earthquake struck at 1:01 p.m. est (1801 GMT) and was centred off the sparsely populated island chain about 1,296 kilometres north of Tokyo.

He said the centre had recorded the earthquake as measuring 8.0 on the open-ended Richter Scale, which would make it a major seismic event outstripping all but a handful of history's most damaging quakes.

He said, however, that the centre had thus far received no reports of deaths or damage in the Kurils, a string of Russian-administered islands off Japan's northern tip.

Mr. Minsch said tidal wave, or tsunami, warnings had been issued for regions of the Pacific but had since been cancelled after it was determined that no there was no threat of a "Pacific-wide" tidal wave.

The Kurils experienced a quake of roughly similar magnitude in 1994 which killed 10 people, Mr. Minsch said.

Earthquakes rated 5.0 or higher are considered capable of causing moderate damage in urban areas. But the nature of the scale means a 6.0 earthquake would release 30 times the energy of a 5.0 temblor and can cause building collapse and loss of life.

Geologists say that an earthquake that registers 7.0 to 7.9 can cause widespread heavy damage and casualties. A quake of 8.0 and above is capable of tremendous damage.

The 1985 earthquake that killed some 8,000 people in Mexico City was recorded at 8.1 on the Richter Scale, while San Francisco's famous 1906 quake measured 8.3.

1 dead, 5 hurt in Moscow restaurant shootout

MOSCOW (AFP) — Two assailants opened fire in a downtown Moscow restaurant, killing one person and wounding five others, one of whom was British, the Interfax News Agency said Monday.

The incident occurred Saturday night when two unidentified assailants burst through the service entrance of the Angara Restaurant and started shooting, killing one victim and wounding others.

They then fled through the dining room and opened fire on customers, wounding two more people including the Briton.

In another incident, a home-made bomb went off Saturday night outside the home of a deputy, 45-year-old businessman Artem Tarassov who was not home at the time, but left no victims, Interfax said quoting Interior Ministry sources.

It said the bomb, made of 150 grammes of TNT, broke windows in the building.

Mr. Tarassov started out in business in 1987 during the period, of "perestroika" started by former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

He emigrated to Britain in March 1991 after his Istok Company was implicated in a scandal involving imports of wheat and food products. He returned in 1993 however and was elected a deputy to the Duma, or lower house of parliament.

Four Russian deputies have been killed in 19 months, and the murderers in the first three cases have never been found.

The fourth, Sergei Markidonov, was shot by his own bodyguard last month in a hotel in the southern Siberian city of Petrovsk-Zabaikalski, according to investigators.

Crime in Russia rose by more than 10 per cent this year compared with 1994, with a significant increase in economic crimes such as fraud. Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev said in October.

Taiwan leader blasts China but suffers double blow

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's president, resisting an election message to repair ties with China, blasted Beijing Monday but suffered a double blow as his popularity rating dropped and a senior figure opted out of the ruling party.

In Beijing, China hailed the ruling Nationalist Party's sharply diminished majority in Taiwan's parliament as a favourable outcome from Saturday's polls, saying it showed that this island's people do not want independence.

Mr. Lee remained defiant, appearing unwilling to accommodate a growing part of the electorate which voted for an opposition party favouring reconciliation with Beijing.

"Communist China's aim to suppress and even plot to isolate the Republic of China (Taiwan's official name) is impossible to be reached," a presidential office statement quoted Mr. Lee as saying.

China has held repeated recent military exercises near this island to pressure Taiwan into dropping efforts to expand its diplomatic ties and convince Taipei to move faster toward reunifying with Beijing.

Mr. Lee showed he has not budged on his stance that Taiwan, which split with the mainland in 1949 after a civil war, cannot reunify until China becomes a democracy.

"National reunification (with China) is the goal which (Taiwan) has been seeking for a long time but the prior condition is that the mainland becomes democratic and free," the statement quoted Mr. Lee as adding.

"We absolutely cannot accept Communist China's claim that we are a local government," he told members of a visiting association of the U.S. television industry.

The ruling Nationalists, of which Mr. Lee is chairman, suffered their biggest ever electoral blow Saturday but hung on to a razor-thin majority of 85 seats in the 164-seat legislative Yuan, down from the current 92.

The biggest gainer was the fledgling New Party, which wants to restore harmony to China relations. It tripled its representation to 21 seats.

The island's main opposition, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) which crusades for independence from China, gained four seats to 54 but found no joy in the result as many of its outspoken pro-independence activists were ousted.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Shen Guofang indicated Beijing was pleased with the result.

"The percentage of votes garnered by the Nationalist Party has fallen, which shows that the Taiwan people universally oppose Taiwan independence," Mr. Shen was quoted by the Beijing-backed Wen Wei Pao newspaper in Hong Kong as saying.

China accused Mr. Lee of covertly supporting independence, a move that Beijing threatens it would attack Taiwan to prevent.

Mr. Lee's defiance coincided with an opinion poll by the United Daily News newspaper showing his support is dwindling.

It said his approval rating among 872 respondents is now 70 per cent, compared with 74 per cent after gubernatorial elections last December. The newspaper said that Mr. Lee's approval rating was the lowest recorded since 1991.

Also Monday, the mayor of the southern city of Tainan, Shih Chi-Ming, said he would quit the ruling Nationalist Party because of its poor general election result.

Mr. Shih's move came one day after Lin Shih-Hui, director of the nationalists' office in Taipei, offered to resign. Only four of the Nationalists' 10 candidates won seats there.

Remains from final Vietnam War action sent home

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia Monday handed American officials the suspected remains of at least four Marines killed in the last U.S. military action of the Vietnam War.

Foreign Minister Ung Huot also signed papers at an airport ceremony for the repatriation of finds from the site of a 1971 helicopter crash in the eastern province of Kompong Cham that left four U.S. servicemen dead.

Representatives of the four U.S. Armed Services carried flag-draped caskets into the cargo bay of a U.S. military aircraft that was due to leave Phnom Penh's Pochentong Airport later Monday for Guam and Hawaii.

The remains, recovered during a joint U.S.-Cambodian operation in Kompong Cham and the offshore island of Koh Tang last month, will be examined at the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii, American military officials said.

"We know that we have a minimum out of Koh Tang of four individuals," said Brigadier General Charles Viale, head of operations to account for American servicemen and citizens still listed as missing from the war that ended in 1975.

He said a new search for a fifth Marine killed in the bungled May 15, 1975 operation to free the 39 crew of the container ship U.S.S. Mayaguez, would likely begin in March when drier weather would allow digging at his grave site.

General Viale, referring to the second search at the site of a UH1 helicopter crash, said "in five days we'd recovered what probably will be two crew men".

The finds on Koh Tang, including human bones and teeth, may belong to some of the 18 Marines and CH53 helicopter pilots missing and believed killed during the botched Mayaguez rescue mission — the last ground combat action of the Vietnam War.

Thirty-eight U.S. servicemen were killed when they attacked Koh Tang in the Gulf of Thailand, 50 kilometres off the Cambodian coast on May 15, 1975, almost one month after the Communist Khmer Rouge had overthrown the U.S.-backed Lon Nol Republicans.

Then President Gerald Ford ordered the attack in the mistaken belief that the crew of the Mayaguez, seized by the Khmer Rouge but already freed, were being held there.

Kashmir hostages enter 6th month in captivity

SRINAGAR, India (R) — Three of four Westerners held hostage by the shadowy Al-Faran militant group in Kashmir entered their sixth month in captivity Monday with no sign of an immediate end to the crisis.

"We have been appealing to the abductors to release the hostages before Christmas. But it is all in their hands. They have not made contact with the government for the last week," K.B. Jandial, spokesman of the Jammu and Kashmir government told Reuters.

This is by far the longest hostage crisis involving foreigners in Kashmir.

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 684311, 699634
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

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Health service needs care

ONE SHOULD not be fooled by the latest advanced technology acquisition of the Kingdom's Royal Medical Services (RMS) into believing that all is well with one of the largest health care providers of the Kingdom. And the first to admit to the situation are the principals at RMS.

At a meeting with the press Monday, these doctors said that the JD 42 million allocated in the national budget for the Army Medical Corps was simply insufficient, particularly as 25 per cent of the Kingdom's population are beneficiaries of the services offered at nine hospitals run by the RMS. What smacks of the painful truth is that every military person is entitled to medical expense benefits for his dependents. Those dependents could easily include the military person's wife (or wives), children, parents, and divorced or widowed sisters. An average of eight people per family are covered under the military health care plan which includes primary as well as incidental health care. All this coverage is for a nominal JD 1 to JD 1.5 per month in health care premium paid by the prime beneficiary.

The minister of finance has lent a sympathetic ear to the distress signals of the RMS and even took some measures to help out in the 1996 budget. But excellence and state-of-the-art equipment come at hefty prices. In addition, another burden weighs heavily on the professional staff of the King Hussein Medical Centre (madineh) in particular. Because the doctors in that expansive facility are among the best prepared professionally, their reputation, ironically, seems to do them a disservice. Everybody wants to be treated at the "madineh" and they stop at no trick — the best known being "wasta" — to benefit from the expertise of the centre's staff.

No doubt then that there are complaints of long waiting lists, overcrowded conditions, and short-tempered staff. Eight other military medical facilities are staffed and equipped to care for most patient-beneficiaries in their respective areas. The RMS took additional steps to counter other shortcomings, such as installing CT-Scans and dialysis equipment in its Irbid and Karak centres. Still the vast majority of that 25 per cent of Jordanians covered under the RMS package insist on being treated at the King Hussein Medical Centre. The drain can become debilitating if the budget allocation is not increased, if the pathetic premium is not raised, and if the public is not made aware of their responsibility to the state rather than their insistence on dependency.

No matter how many suggestions, or courses of action, there are to adopt in order to help the Royal Medical Services in achieving their mission, we have to do what is necessary to support this important health sector. They have shown over the years their true worth, how with determination and irregularity they can overcome the obstacle of limited resources to perform an excellent job. True, Jordan's health delivery system needs to be overhauled. But the Royal Medical Services are, have been, on the right track. With some effort and extra funding on the state's part, they can be made into the right example to follow in what needs to be done in the country's public health sector as a whole.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IBRAHIM AL Absi, a writer in **Al Ra'i**, expressed the view that the battle of the final phase of negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis has begun. He cited the Israeli foreign minister's statements in which he declared Israel's intention to retain control over all of Jerusalem, the borders and the settlements as a clear signal of the Jewish state's final positison. He said the foreign minister's statements, coupled with a demand by the Israeli prime minister that the Palestinians change their charter and delete all phrases calling for the destruction of Israel even before the completion of the redeployment, are clear indications of Israel's adamant position of preventing the Palestinians from establishing their independent state. Under the Oslo agreement questions like the future status of Jerusalem, the Palestine refugees and the settlements are to be discussed in the final phase of the negotiations, but it seems that the Israelis have made up their mind in advance, which means that they accept no discussion over these crucial matters, said the writer. He said that it remains to be seen whether the Palestinian leadership would handle this situation with firmness or succumb to Israel's dictated terms.

COMMENTING ON the results of the Egyptian parliamentary elections, a writer in **Al Dustour** said that the Egyptian regime is facing a real crisis following the exclusion of opposition parties from the national assembly and for rigging the elections. Yasser Zaatreh said the opposition groups, mainly the Islamists, who enjoy wide public support and the Copts, who were denied seats in parliament, together form a real powerful force that is to bound to cause serious headaches to the government. Indeed, with the manipulation of the election results, the regime has served a deadly blow to any form of democracy and paved the ground for an all-out popular opposition, hostile to the government and opposing all its moves. This attitude on the part of the Egyptian regime is bound to create confrontation between the government and the Egyptian social institutions and political groups, who do not see eye to eye with most government policies, added the writer. In addition to rigging the election results, the regime has antagonised the professional unions, especially the lawyers which represent the views of the educated elite and has thus surrounded itself with an ocean of enmity unprecedented in Egypt's history.

The View from Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

The refreshing review of political sins, justice, decency

SOMETHING VERY important is happening around the world that we in the Middle East should take greater notice of: Former government officials — some elected, others self-appointed — are being held responsible for their past actions. In some cases, they are being prosecuted and jailed. The Arab World and Israel are not totally exempt from this trend, but their actions to date in this respect are neither very effective nor very credible. The two-day seminar last week on corruption in Jordan was an intriguing sign of concern here for the actions of public officials and private persons, though far more impressive was the decision 10 days ago in Kuwait to try a senior prince and former oil minister for alleged corruption. Israel's capacity to deal with the matter of its army's killing of Egyptian prisoners-of-war decades ago remains a litmus test of Israeli state morality in the eyes of many Arabs.

This is a tricky business, putting former officials and leaders on trial. It can easily fall victim to trendy politics, exaggerated emotions and personal pique. It can easily degenerate from a process of legitimate accountability to acts of vindictive revenge and retribution. Yet it is important to explore the wider implications and positive purposes of holding former officials accountable for their deeds, especially in the Middle East, where the past is so pervasive, so incredibly powerful and even haunting for Arabs and Israelis alike.

A process is needed to heal the huge wounds and substantial waste of the past, while simultaneously strengthening attempts to forge a better future for people who deserve it. This worldwide drive to hold former officials responsible for their actions may be a good candidate. It is impressive in both its scope and intensity. Note the following cases that have made news only in the last few weeks:

— The main opposition party in Mexico has formally charged former Mexican president Carlos Salinas with treason and fraud in connection with the 1990 privatisation of the state-owned telephone company.

— In South Africa, former defence minister General Magnus Malan and 19 others have been formally charged with murdering over a dozen people in 1987. At the same time, a Truth and Reconciliation commission headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu has started investigating charges of death, torture and other abuses committed for or against the apartheid system during the 34 years that it existed.

— In Spain, a Senate committee has started hearing witnesses in its probe of allegations that the government conducted a "dirty war" of assassinations against Basque separatists in the mid-1980s.

— In South Korea, former presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo are in jail or have been formally charged with alleged offences committed in the 1980s, including illegally accepting bribes from businesses, taking power by military coup, and massacring civilians.

— In Kuwait, senior prince and former oil minister Sheikh Ali Khalifah Al Sabah is being referred to a special court established to try former ministers, where he will stand trial for allegedly making illegal personal profits from deals related to the national oil tanker company. (Kuwait? Kuwait!)

— In Italy, former prime minister Giulio Andreotti is on trial for assorted charges of financial and political misconduct and for allegedly doing secret deals with the mafia.

Why are these cases and others like them significant? For two reasons, I would suggest, one related to the officials and the other to the citizenry. First, these cases emphasise the importance of the concept of responsibility and trust in public life, the idea that public servants are there to serve the people, and not to enrich themselves. This is about the integrity of society, about communities, governments and entire nations that can function in a manner that satisfies the vast majority of their people, because public power is being used rationally in the service of the people, and public wealth is not being siphoned off to the pockets of public officials, their children, cousins or guards.

Second, trials of former officials charged with abuse of power emphasise the importance of dignity and self-respect in the eyes of the citizenry, the idea that ordinary folks are human beings with a sufficiently live sense of our own worth that makes us resent being treated like sheep or simpletons. Some incompetence among our officials we can handle. A touch of the bon vivant is almost dashing. The occasional provincial buffoonery is even amusing. But theft, corruption, repression and death are unacceptable, and, sooner or later, they will be dealt with. That is the message we hear these days from around the world, including from parts of the Middle East, where the citizenry has long been fascinated by the spectacle of ordinary folks achieving public fame and wealth so dehumanising experience to be treated by your own public officials like a fool, or an inconsequential and stupid animal. One can understand such behaviour at the hands of foreign military occupiers, but not at the hands of one's own nationals, or neighbours.

Holding former officials responsible for their indecent or violent actions is a constructive act, a cleansing and healing act that relieves society of pent-up stress and paves the way for decency and honourable nationhood. This non-lethal, non-violent act of justice is usually sufficient to make degraded people feel a rejuvenated sense of pride and humanity, where they had once suffered sustained humiliation and dehumanisation. Attempts to seek justice for society as a whole and to punish the abusive bad guys must be carried out in a manner that affirms justice, trust and fairness — so that these values can form the platform from which reinvigorated individuals and refreshed societies work for a better future.

The biggest test of any country is not how well it can build roads or schools, or administer bureaucracies or operate parliaments, but rather how well it can administer a system of justice that is credible to its own people. Justice is merely the collective expression of an individual's sense of self-worth and integrity. There is justice in the land when individuals feel they can have their day in court, when they have means of expressing their own ideas, when their desires and rights are carefully considered by those who wield power, and when their feelings and emotions are taken into consideration in the formulation of public policy. Justice is not only about courts and judges and lawyers. It is also about the relationship of trust and responsibility between those who wield public power, and those who form the public in whose name power is wielded.

Abuse of power, public theft, corruption, unnecessary autocracy, unprovoked intellectual or physical violence by the state against its own people, and other ugly things endured for decades around the world because the prevailing cold war order tolerated them as necessary evils that were subservient to larger goals. Today, such degradations are deemed unacceptable, and we already witness the inevitable backlash against the misdeeds and grievances of the recent past.

Many in or near the seats of power today will ask the ordinary folks to forget the past, and instead to look to the future. That's good practical advice, but it is the moral equivalent of Swiss cheese — full of holes. The redress of grievances through non-violent and reconciliatory means is not only a political imperative for any society; it is also a core moral foundation for the three great monotheistic religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, which declare that our deeds will be judged by God after our days on earth have finished. Same judicial principle; different time frame, jurisdiction, and venue.

Holding people responsible for their past crimes is an act of humanism, not barbarism; it allows a politically polluted society to cleanse the air, to start afresh, to seek to live an honourable and humble life devoid of the excesses of either official brutality or individual indignation. When public officials who committed verifiable crimes are brought to justice and punished according to the humane dictates of the law, no further apologies are necessary, no blood money sought, no vindictive killings required. The act of justice itself clears the air of anger, rids the spirit of meanness.

These are important issues for the world, as we see this month, and they are also important for the people of the Middle East. Our Semitic landscape still suffers the multiple, cumulative agonies of misdeeds carried out by many different parties during this most violent and tiring century. It is crucial that we of the resident Semitic family of Christians, Muslims and Jews start to work together to determine how we will deal with the physical, moral and intellectual atrocities of the past, whether committed within countries or between countries, whether against captured soldiers in the desert or children in schools, whether by state armies or private militia, by elected executives or self-appointed saviours. Some amongst us want to forget the past, but the whole world is saying that the past cannot be forgotten so quickly, so dismissively.

The whole world today is saying that justice is necessary and good, that people must take responsibility for their past actions in office, even well after they leave office. From the world's new power brokers in Washington, London, Paris, Bonn and other centres of merchandising of global political morality, we seem to hear only applause. This is most novel, and most refreshing. Will justice and punishment for the misdeeds of past public offenders emerge as the new foundation for political morality that is truly universal because it is truly impartial? Let us hope so, and keep watching, in the deserts as in the mountains and cities.

Bosnia: Remember Somalia?

By Gwynne Dyer

"REMEMBER SOMALIA? We, too, will drag the bodies of dead soldiers through the streets."

The Bosnian Serb who made that remark to a Western journalist on the morrow of the Bosnian peace deal in Dayton, Ohio, was not just talking tough. He was referring to a strategy that has served the Bosnian Serbs well in the past, and is almost certain to have one more outing before the 60,000-strong Implementation Force (I-For) deploys in Bosnia in mid-December.

Indeed, if the strategy works as it did in the past, the U.S. Congress might even refuse to back President Bill Clinton's promise to send 20,000 U.S. troops to Bosnia to enforce the Dayton agreement. And if the American troops don't show up, then probably nobody else will either.

Right now, many Bosnian Serbs are thinking the same thought. If they can create a spectacular incident and kill a substantial number of peace-keeping troops (preferably from the American vanguard force that starts arriving this week, but any U.N. troops will do in a pinch), then the rest of the American force may never be sent. And then they won't have to give up Sarajevo.

So kidnap some peacekeepers (as they have done many times before), but this time kill them before the television cameras. The objective would be to create the same kind of panic that swept the United States after 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in a firefight in Mogadishu in 1993.

Nobody in the United States observed that when you commit soldiers to combat, people die. Nobody noted that the American troops acquitted themselves very well, killing an estimated 364 Somali militiamen during the night's fighting, even though they had no armour, artillery or air support.

The American public gazed in horror at the T.V. pictures of U.S. soldiers' bodies being dragged through the streets, and demanded out. The American component of the peace-keeping force was gone in a month, and the whole attempt to rebuild a civil government in Somalia collapsed shortly thereafter. Somalia was left to its fate — which is already renewed civil war, and will eventually be renewed famine, too.

If the same kind of panic in the United States is to save the Bosnian Serbs from having to submit to the terms of the Dayton agreement, then they must generate it before the full strength of I-For is deployed.

Once President Bill Clinton has actually sent 20,000 American troops to Bosnia, he cannot promptly withdraw them again without a fatal loss of political face. At that point, it becomes simpler for him to tough it out whatever the cost. But during the next two or three weeks, Congress, the American public, and even Mr. Clinton himself could be frightened off by a sufficiently horrifying incident.

Why would the Bosnian Serbs do such a thing? Because they are the major losers of the Dayton accord, being required, among other thing to give up five suburbs of Sarajevo home to about 600,000 Serbs, that they have held since the beginning of the war.

Many would say that the Bosnian Serbs richly deserve to be the losers, given that they started the war and were the main perpetrators of ethnic cleansing and genocide during it. Some would add out that they were losing badly on the battlefields in the weeks before the ceasefire last autumn, and that the treaty saved them from even worse losses had the war continued.

Nevertheless, they are being required to hand over territories to Bosnian government control that they still held, and were in no immediate danger of losing, at the war's end. And they didn't expect them to be signed away at Dayton.

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, who negotiated on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs at Dayton (since their own leaders are indicted war criminals who face arrest if they go abroad), had his own reasons for making these concessions. He desperately wanted a peace deal so that the United Nations would lift its crippling trade sanctions against his country.

But the Bosnian Serb reluctance was so great that Mr. Milosevic literally did not tell their leaders the terms of the deal until the morning of the signing ceremony in Dayton. And even now, they have not really accepted it.

"President" Radovan Karadzic has formally accepted the deal on behalf of the Bosnian Serb government, but in a familiar old ploy, he has added that he cannot be blamed if his citizens rebel against it. Ominously, General Ratko Mladic, who probably wields more real power than Mr. Karadzic, has not said anything at all. And both men have every reason to sabotage the Dayton agreement, because it requires that they both leave power.

Do the 60,000 Bosnian Serbs who live in the Sarajevo suburbs of Mr. Grabavica, Ilidza, Hadzici, Vogosca and Ilijas really face ethnic cleansing if they pass under Bosnian government rule? No, they don't. The legitimate Bosnian government, though predominantly Muslim, has never been racist.

Serbs living in the government-controlled part of the capital have never been expelled. Indeed, many honourable Bosnian Serbs have fought and died alongside Muslim soldiers in defence of a Bosnia that is tolerant of ethnic and religious differences.

But four years of atrocity propaganda have convinced most residents of the (now mainly Serbian) suburbs that are due to be reunited with the rest of Sarajevo that their only choices are to wreck the peace deal or else to become refugees. And of course the war criminals who stand to lose everything if the deal goes through are not bending over backwards to enlighten them.

So there is ample dry tinder available, and several weeks in which the Bosnian Serb leaders could ignite it (deniably, of course) into savage attacks on lightly armed peacekeepers. With the ultimate goal of scaring the Americans into staying home.

LETTERS

Learning to listen

To the Editor:

IN HER letter to the editor, "An anticrime programme is needed" (Jordan Times, Dec. 3), Lina Muasher Oweis addressed a significant subject. I am extremely impressed with the awakening of my fellow Jordanian citizens to the subject of abuse. Ms. Oweis stresses the need for further assistance in the healing of criminals and their victims through psychological counseling, which I fully agree and support, and would like to expand a little more upon.

Abuse is usually thought of and generalised by the public as physical beatings or sexual molestation by peers and adults towards women and children. People tend to ignore the fact that abuse takes many forms and does not discriminate against colour, gender, age and/or social status. The most significant form of abuse, that in most cases slips by unnoticed, is verbal abuse, which is just as effective in creating a life-long sense of guilt and anger as sexual molestation does. Most people never realise the effect of a few harsh or irresponsible words repeated over and again until it is too late, that is when most people ask themselves Ohhh! where have we gone wrong? and that is when we realise that the problem is ignorance on the part of most parents. Ignorance is not a bad word; it just means lack of knowledge, the lack of knowledge in the art of listening and how to read-between-the-lines so that parents can help with their children's needs by understanding. Once they understand is when they will accept, and that is truly what all children need: acceptance. Not knowing how to listen is the real family killer, which in-turn becomes the society destroyer and hence develops a disfunctional society.

Parenting is the base and back-bone of society and civilisation as we want it to be. This is where we have to focus our attention and energy. If parents are helped, then sexual, physical and verbal abuse will be reduced. In turn, crime will also be reduced. Psychologists and therapists along with the Ministry of Health and the local media have to get together and brain-storm to create a kind of educational system that would help the entire nation and not just the people who call up enough courage to be treated and helped by counseling.

Robert T. Nazzal.
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Tell Abu l Kharaz: Uncovering early urbanism, rewriting historical chronology

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

AFTER A survey and six seasons of excavations at Tell Abu El Kharaz in the north Jordan Valley, a Swedish team from the University of Göteborg has expanded our knowledge of early human urbanism and trade, while also pushing back the accepted chronology of historical periods in the Levant region and perhaps even in Egypt.

The Swedish team, headed by Peter Fischer of the university's classical studies department, has uncovered substantial urban remains from three distinct periods — the Early and Late Bronze Ages and the Iron Age — spanning the time period from approximately 3400-600 BC.

Tell Abu El Kharaz ("Mound of the Father of Beads") flourished in antiquity primarily because of its strategic location in a rich natural environment. Sited near plentiful water from the adjacent Wadi Yabis and bountiful woodlands in its eastern hills, five kilometres south of Pella, it occupies the flat top of a large natural hill with steep slopes that were easy to defend. The 60-metre-high hill with accumulated debris from the ancient towns is partly natural. The site's height and position provide a panoramic view of the north Jordan Valley. On a clear day, from the site one can see the hills of Nazareth and the area around Tell Es Sa'idiyeh in the central valley. Due to its strategic position, in ancient times the site controlled the main road through the Jordan Valley and the secondary road along the Wadi Yabis to the highlands to the east.

The earliest settlement yet revealed by the excavations dates from the Early Bronze Age IB. The traditional scholarly consensus dates the Early Bronze (EB) Age from approximately 3300-2000 BC, but Dr. Fischer's Carbon-14 dating of over 20 samples from the site is pushing back the chronology of these early urban periods. His Carbon-14 dates indicate that the EBI period should start around 3400-3300 BC (and the EBIA period around 3600 BC), and this data seems to correlate with similar information from the British-led excavation at Tell Esh Shounch North. It is possible that the information generated from the north Jordan Valley may spark a reconsideration of the dating of some of the early Egyptian chronological/cultural periods, eg. the predynastic Naqada III period of Upper Egypt.

The EBIB settlement at Tell Abu El Kharaz may have been a walled town or simply an open settlement. Its material goods included imported Egyptian pottery — the first of its kind ever found in the east or west banks of the valley from this period.

The beginning of the EBII period is contemporaneous with the First Dynasty of Egypt, c. 3150-2800 BC for the EBII period, according to Dr. Fischer, as opposed to the traditional dating of 3000-2700 BC for EBII. In this period, the settlement at Tell Abu El Kharaz was protected by a massive city wall whose all-stone foundations measured 3-5 metres wide and at least four metres high, meaning the actual wall above ground probably rose another three or four metres high and was constructed of mudbrick. This is thought to be the only excavated wall of its kind from the EBII period in Jordan, and maybe in all of Palestine as well. Numerous test trenches revealed parts of the EBII town, which for its time covered a relatively large area of three-four hectares. Inside the town were houses made of mudbrick walls on stone foundations, whose inhabitants were quite well off, to judge by their pottery, jewellery, beads, shells, mace heads, pins and metal weapons made of a copper alloy and the large amount of stored grain found.

EBII material cultural remains also included "Abydos ware" (pottery produced in Palestine and exported to Egypt), many large, complete storage jars measuring a metre high, and some fascinating little cylinder seals that were used to make geometric patterns on pottery. The seals are made of bone and hippopotamus ivory; it is not clear if the hippo ivory was imported from Egypt or Cyprus or came from local hippos.

The EBII town shows at least three major destruction phases, due to reasons as yet undetermined. Similar destruction levels have been identified at Tell Es Sa'idiyeh in the central valley. After the EBII town, the site appears to have been abandoned for a very long time — about 1300 years. This long break from c.2800-1500 BC is surprising because nearby sites such as Pella and Tell Deir Alla have substantial town remains from this time, especially from the Middle Bronze period; further excavations will reveal if Tell Abu El Kharaz had a similar or different occupational history.

The male warrior-god statue that was excavated from Iron Age II levels but certainly dates from the earlier Late Bronze Age period. In his right hand he holds a weapon and in his left a papyrus scroll; he has ostrich plumes on his head and the holy cobra on his forehead. (Photo by A. Nilsson)

The next identifiable occupation phase was in the Late Bronze I period, starting around 1530 BC, i.e. the beginning of the New Kingdom, the 18th Dynasty, in Egypt. The town seems to have become smaller since the Early Bronze Age, and the city wall changed from a solid, massive structure into a casemate wall (two parallel stone walls with side walls in between them forming rooms within the wall). Some mudbrick sections of the city wall still stand on their stone foundations. Domestic architecture continued the forms of the Early Bronze Age. Many fires during the late Bronze Age period suggest that the town suffered several destructions and was repeatedly rebuilt.

An excavated square within the urban area seems to have uncovered an industrial complex; it comprises a bakery-like facility of four tawabeen (singular: tabun, a clay oven) in a row separated by small stone walls, and may have served as the town's central bakery. A small, 5X6-metre Late Bronze Age temple was excavated, including many clay pots lying in their original place on an ancient altar that dates from just after 1400 BC.

Dr. Fischer stands on the smaller Early Bronze I city wall, while the much larger Early Bronze II city wall towers above him. (Photoby R. Holmgren)

The town's people seemed to continue to enjoy their relatively wealthy status, judging by their imported goods from Cyprus and other places in the east Mediterranean region. Small finds from this period include excellently manufactured and very well preserved pottery (Chocolate-on-White and burnished Bichrome) that parallels pottery found in Palestine and on the Mediterranean coast. Petrographic analyses of the clay reveal that these vessels were produced in the Jordan Valley, rather than elsewhere as previously thought. A beautiful little stamp seal made of white alabaster carries the design of two antelopes leaning against a tree. A hole in it suggests it was worn like a necklace and used as a personal seal.

The nicely decorated bone handle excavated from Iron II levels. (Photo by R. Holmgren)

The next major town at Tell Abu El Kharaz dates from the Iron Age, when the people's economic status seems to have declined somewhat, according to more coarse pottery and fewer imported materials. The city wall (?) from the Iron I period (c.1200-1000 BC) indicates a continuing need for defensive systems, and the architectural remains from the Iron II period (c.1000-600 BC) include towers and well built houses whose people resumed importing goods from the eastern Mediterranean region.

The material remains found from the Iron II period include an exquisite decorated bone handle with a motif of two sphynxes that has parallels at Hazor in Palestine and Nimrud in Assyria. This Palestinian-made type of handle was certainly brought to Nimrud with the returning Assyrian invaders who occupied this area around 720 BC. Other interesting Iron Age II finds include a clay mask of a bearded and smiling young male painted in red, attached originally to an anthropomorphic vessel; a decorated stone cosmetic plate; and a small, very well preserved bronze-silver statue of a male warrior-god from an *obviously religious context* — with lion and human legs resembling the Egyptian goddess Sechmet. The statue seems to be a local male copy of the Egyptian female original; though it was found in an Iron Age context, it almost certainly dates originally from the Late Bronze Age, i.e., it was kept for centuries because of its religious importance.

On the summit of the Tell the archaeologists found pottery from the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods, and there are visible walls that probably date from these post-Iron Age periods, though they have not been excavated.

The material wellbeing and duration of the Bronze and Iron Age towns at Tell Abu El Kharaz speak much about ancient wealth in Jordanian urbanism. This wealth reflected extensive trading in the east Mediterranean region, but was built on a solid foundation of local agricultural and cattle-breeding. Surplus grain produced in the Jordan Valley financed imported goods from Egypt, Cyprus, Syria and Greece. Why the town became smaller over time remains to be determined. It could be due to climatic changes, degradation of local soil or water resources, or deteriorating political conditions.

The large size and thick walls of the Bronze Age towns may also reflect the site's role in antiquity; this fertile region had many smaller, open farming and livestocking hamlets or villages, whose residents may have fled into the walled citadel for protection in times of war.

On the basis of the identification of plants and animals that formed part of the ancient towns' economies, it is known that wheat, sheep and goat formed the backbone of the economy in the Bronze Age, while in Iron Age cattle became relatively more important and cereals less important. In both periods, the residents used barley, wheat (emmer and einkorn), lentil, broad bean, flax, fig, olive and grape. Animal remains found at the site were of sheep, goat, cattle, pig, deer, gazelle, dog, equid, rodent, cat, fox, brown bear and hippopotamus.

Scholars continue to debate the ancient identification of Tell Abu El Kharaz, a commonly suggested one being with the biblical city of Jabesh-Gilead; Dr. Fischer suggests this is one possible candidate, but he does not have any evidence to attempt a firm identification. The other plausible candidate for Jabesh-Gilead is the nearby Tell Maqlub, which is more isolated and has no substantial view of the valley floor, and thus probably does not fit the description in the Bible.

The excavations have been financed primarily by the Swedish government via the former Swedish Board for Investment and Technical Support (now SIDA), and staff and logistical support have been given by the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and Yarmouk University (represented by Zeidan Kafafi). The dig is affiliated with Göteborg University in Sweden and has received assistance in Amman from the American Centre for Oriental Research. The excavators have also expressed their appreciation for support and encouragement from Their Royal Highnesses Prince Raad and Princess Majda.

The dig will continue in 1996, and the site seems relatively safe for the moment, because the land is privately owned and is not slated for any modern development projects. Illegal excavations and theft of antiquities were a problem at some stages in the dig, but are less threatening today because the excavators have adopted the habit of refilling their excavation trenches.

However, efforts are being made by the excavators and the Department of Antiquities to consolidate excavated and exposed structures, especially the important Early Bronze city wall, the Late Bronze casemate defence system, and the Late Bronze Age "bakery". This aims to preserve important historical architecture and also to allow visitors a better appreciation of the city in its glory days. New efforts will be made in future to raise additional funding to consolidate some of these important ancient structures that may be unique in some cases, and therefore of global as well as local and regional interest.

King receives Russian message

(Continued from page 1)

Following the meeting, Mr. Posavalyuk told Jordan Television that he briefed Mr. Kabariti on the outcome of his current regional tour which has already taken him to Syria, Lebanon, Israel and the Gaza Strip.

"There are positive signs to push forward the peace process on all tracks," he told JTV in an apparent reference to recent statements expressing Syria's commitment to a settlement with Israel.

Mr. Posavalyuk said he discussed with Mr. Kabariti "the situation in Iraq and the need to end the suffering of the Iraqi people" caused by U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

GCC leaders open summit

(Continued from page 1)

Saad Qasim Hamoudi as saying: "Future relations among Gulf states make it necessary for these states to be open with Iraq, which is an important element of stability in this sensitive region."

"The continuation of the pretext that Iraq should implement all U.N. resolutions misses the fact that Iraq has met all commitments towards these resolutions," said Mr. Hamoudi, a senior member of the ruling Baath Party.

Sheikh Zayed said in October the time had come for lifting sanctions on Baghdad to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people and restore the country to the Arab fold.

Qatar and Oman backed the call, but it raised concern in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who still insist on a tougher line.

Sheikh Zayed said his country would continue talks with Iran to resolve a row over three disputed Gulf islands — the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. If this failed, the UAE would go to the International Court of Justice.

UAE and Iranian experts, at their first meetings since unsuccessful talks in Abu Dhabi in 1992, failed to agree recently on an agenda to solve the row.

"Iran does not want to give the right to its owners," Sheikh Zayed said. "They want to negotiate to take, not to give. This is impossible. "Our position is clear, you know it, and the world knows it: They have attacked us."

SSC

(Continued from page 1)

times the last monthly salary of the employee plus a monthly payment as stipulated under the corporation's laws and regulations.

The employee's lawyer, Samar Assaf, argued that the end-of-service payment was the right of every Jordanian worker and it could not be nullified or substituted regardless of pension or any other benefits. She cited several rulings and legal provisions that held up this right.

But, the SSC official argued, the law that established the corporation stipulates : such payments would come either in the form of a one-time payment or monthly payments as opted by the beneficiary at the time of retirement.

"We are sure that the Appeals Court, once it closely studies the provisions of the law that established the Social Security Corporation, will reverse the Court of First Instance decision," said the official.

JPA protests amendments

(Continued from page 1)

board, said the board's 10 members unanimously decided to reject all proposed amendments.

If the government insisted on these changes, the JPA would launch an organised campaign through the press and the Lower House of Parliament to counter it, he said.

"We studied the amendments in full and we see an infringement on press freedoms and a set back to the gains made in comparison with the previous law," Mr. Hiyari said. "The proposed amendments are worse than martial law."

Although Mr. Hiyari agreed on the need to amend the current law, he said that any proposed amendments should be a step further in the democratic process in the country.

"We would request for a meeting with the prime minister or the King if need be," he added.

The JPA's board includes, in addition to the president, three editors representing daily newspapers, three members representing the Jordan News Agency, Petra, and another three representing owners of publications. Mr. Hiyari said all the 10 voted unanimously against the amendments.

"The board had to adopt a firm decision," Mr. Hiyari said.

Since they started publication, weekly newspapers have been under scrutiny and criticism from the JPA itself. Last year, the JPA severely criticised three weekly newspapers for publishing "obscene photos and fabricated information."

This year, the Press and Publications Department at the Ministry of Information suspended two weeklies, Hawadeth Al Sa'ah and Al Bilad, because their chief editors were not JPA members. The two weeklies took the case to court which ruled against the suspension.

Ross launches new shuttle

(Continued from page 1)

saying Syria and Israel had failed to "put anything on paper" in the four years since the peace process has been launched.

"Certain givens are understood by both sides. Syria realises that a normalisation of ties will eventually mean an Israeli embassy in Damascus and Israel knows it will have to pull out of the Golan.

"But unless someone breaks or unless someone makes a bold move for peace nothing will be accomplished," said one diplomat.

An Israeli minister said the latest mission by Mr. Ross could be the last chance to revive talks with Syria.

"It seems to me that the Americans are willing to give another chance ... for a dramatic move between Israel and Syria," cabinet Minister Yossi Beilin told Israeli army radio.

"If they view it as difficult or impossible, I don't think another opportunity will come along during this American administration," said Mr. Beilin.

Mr. Beilin said Israel would ask Mr. Ross to deliver to Syria its long-standing demand for direct, high-level talks.

"I am, again, not overly optimistic," Mr. Beilin said.

U.S. officials have said secretary Christopher could find time for a Middle East shuttle if Mr. Ross was convinced it could significantly aid the peace process.

"I think still the majority of the effort will be on the Americans," Mr. Beilin said.

Brotherhood: No cabinet role

(Continued from page 12)

countries are going back to the ages of nationalisation."

Deploring violence and condemning terrorism, the Brotherhood leader insisted that the Brotherhood's ways would be peaceful.

In Egypt, "they adopted violent means after the failure of the democratic experiment. The ruling party usurped parliament seats to itself but the Muslim Brotherhood (in Egypt) did not employ violent means and they condemned violence."

Mr. Thuneibat said he believed that the West was launching campaigns against Islam.

"Violence exists everywhere... in Japan, in France, in Egypt, everywhere," he said. "It is not limited to Muslim countries."

Although he said that the Brotherhood was not asked to participate in future cabinet in Jordan and the issue was not discussed with the Brotherhood, Mr. Thuneibat declared that the group would not participate even if it was asked to.

"Our general interest does not compel us to participate in the government for the time being," he said. "This stand is based on our principles."

Mr. Thuneibat criticised the concept of confederation between Jordan and Palestinian entity.

"How can we forge a confederation between a country and people on a land over which they have no sovereignty?" he asked. "It is one form of liquidating the Palestinian issue."

He also criticised calls for a federation in Iraq and said these concepts were part of what he described as the Zionist scheme to divide the region.

Mr. Thuneibat claimed that his criticism of the government's policies were not based on the failure of the Islamic Action Front in Saturday's elections to the Lower House of Parliament's Permanent Bureau.

The front, which insisted on nominating Abdullah Akaileh for the House speakership, withdrew at last minute because of what observers believed as its limited chances to win the race. The IAF also lost the race to the post of deputy speaker and did not nominate any candidate for other posts.

"It is not because we failed in parliament that we are demonstrating our opposition," Mr. Thuneibat said. "We have always fought for freedom of expression and freedom of the press within the general framework."

Mr. Thuneibat insisted that freedom of the press should be in line with Islamic values and traditions.

"We will oppose any amendments through parliament, press and political parties," he said. "But we should not be giving the government any justification to repress freedom of the press."

Mr. Thuneibat referred to a case he filed against the weekly Al Bilad newspaper two weeks ago for publishing a cartoon that "tarnished the image of Islam."

Asked if this action was in contradiction with the movement's claims in defence of press freedoms, Mr. Thuneibat said "Freedom of expression does not mean infringement on the general ethics and morals."

Jordan Times
Tel: 684311/ 699634

NATO troops in ex-Yugoslavia

(Continued from page 1)

part in the mission.

One of arriving soldiers, Eric Johnson, said he was part of the U.N. mission based in Split and, after a three-week break, was coming to Sarajevo as part of the new NATO force.

U.S. President Bill Clinton gave the "official go-ahead Sunday for the first small groups of U.S. soldiers to leave, but their travel plans were not clear. Some Americans, however, were expected to arrive early this week in Kaposvar, Hungary, to set up a transit point.

A convoy of 15 to 20 trucks was set to leave a NATO base in Naples, Italy, on Tuesday for Zagreb, Croatia, carrying equipment for the operation's headquarters, including office furniture, said NATO spokesman Franco Veltri.

The United Nations meanwhile termed Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic's weekend rejection of the Dayton peace plan "not helpful" and pleaded with the Serb side to "get their act together."

"His statement was not helpful to the overall peace process to say the least," said Alexander Ivanko, a U.N. spokesman in Sarajevo.

"When are the Bosnian Serbs going to get their act together and start speaking with one voice? Because basically they're throwing not only their own people but the international community off track."

The Dayton deal was negotiated and initialled by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs.

Neither Gen. Mladic, the Bosnian Serb army commander, nor "President" Radovan Karadzic attended the Dayton peace summit because both risked arrest as indicted war criminals.

Although both men are barred by the Dayton agreement from holding public office in post-war Bosnia, neither has shown any sign of stepping down.

Mr. Karadzic first rejected and later accepted the Dayton plan in recent public comments. Gen. Mladic, a hero to ordinary Serbs who commands the allegiance of the army, was unequivocal in his first remarks on the deal on Saturday.

President Clinton has responded to French concerns about the fate of the Sarajevo Serbs under the Bosnia peace plan, the White House said Monday.

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Arab contractors urge curbs on foreigners

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab governments should introduce restrictions on foreign contractors in carrying out local projects to end their domination of the market, the Arab Contractors' Union (ACU) said Monday.

Without curbs, Arab contractors could even lose more ground with the implementation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreement, which calls for liberalising the construction sector in member states, it said.

"It has been noticed that most Arab countries depend mainly on foreign contracting companies in carrying out development projects. Unfortunately, even small construction ventures such as houses are being awarded to foreigners although such projects could be implemented by Arabs," ACU said in a study published in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) contractors society magazine.

"It is time for Arab countries to force foreign contractors to award sub-contracts to local contractors, provide training to netionals and allow local companies to operate and maintain equipment for the project," it added.

The Moroccan-based union, which groups contracting firms from most Arab nations, did not provide figures bnt independent estimates showed more than 90 per cent of major projects in the region have been awarded to foreigners over the past three decades. Their cost exceeded $500 billion.

Several contractors' associations in the 22-member Arab League have demanded restrictions on foreign contractors on the grounds they cannot compete with them. Bnt governments have argued national firms lack funds and technical and capabilities for implementing major construction enterprises.

Frustration by Arab contractors was most underscored after the Gulf war, when most of the rebuilding projects in Knweit were awarded to Western firms.

"Arab states could liberalise the contracting sector in line with the WTO accord but they should set conditions for foreign participation... They should allocate at least 50 per cent of the local contracts for national companies and restrict competition to local firms for enterprises which are financed by Arab and Islamic institutions," ACU said.

"It is time for measures to promote foreign companies to contribute to the development of the Arab contracting industry and enable local companies to compete with world firms in such a field," it added.

Global inflation 'down for the count', expert says

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Global inflation is easing on the back of reduced growth of money supply after 50 years of high and persistent price rises, a global fund management conference here was told Monday.

"In no other half century — even going back to the earliest periods in recorded history — can we find such an enormous surge in prices," said Alan Walters, vice chairman and director of Washington-based AIG Trading Group Inc.

"And it has been worldwide," Mr. Walters told delegates to the conference cosponsored by the Paris-based newspaper, The International Herald Tribune.

Mr. Walters said: "Now the good news: Inflation is down for the count. I wish I could say that it was dead, bnt I cannot. The count however is certainly for the next two or three years."

He said the main cause was a reduction in the growth rate of money supply in virtually all countries including "big three" — the United States, Germany and Japan.

Monetary growth has been low or negative for some years in both Japan and the United States while Germany has held a tight rein. Some fears have been expressed that the problem now is "actual deflation," said Mr. Walters, with asset prices falling in many countries.

Beyond two or three years, the expert said, his conjecture was that "inflation was down for a decade."

"The main reason is that the big three and most other countries have tried various forms of inflation and suffered the consequences. Inflation brought neither growth nor equity nor political stability. The opposition to inflation is virtually worldwide," he added.

He cited the reluctance of Japanese authorities to engage in massive open market operations to escape from deflation, and a similar determination to attain lower inflation in the European Union and hold the inflation rate below three per cent in the United States.

"As for the rest of the world, I would suggest that although generally starting from much higher levels, inflation rates are being brought down at a smart pace," Mr. Walters added.

The three-day Singapore conference will see fund managers debate which way the world's markets are moving, with special sessions devoted to Asie-Pacific equity and currency markets.

Japan economy posts slim growth in third quarter

TOKYO (R) — Japan posted only marginal economic growth in the July-September quarter and for once, private and government economists agreed on what the latest data meant — Japan's giant economy is still stalled.

The government's Economic Planning Agency (EPA) said Monday that the nation's gross domestic prodnct (GDP) grew a real 0.2 per cent in the July-September period from the previous quarter, or an annualised 0.6 per cent.

In the April-to-June period, GDP rose a revised 0.6 per cent or an annualised 2.6 per cent. Those figures were recalculated to reflect a change in the base year from 1985 to 1990.

"The overall figure (for July-September) was an annualised 0.6 per cent. That's pretty close to stalled," said Jeff Young, economist at Salomon Brothers Asia.

EPA officials agreed, saying the fresh data backed up their view of a stagnant economy and admitting again that it would be tough — read "impossible" — for Japan to attain its earlier forecast of 2.8 per cent growth in the fiscal year ending March 1996.

"Looking at figures for the two previous quarters, I think a growth rate of around one per cent is likely (in 1995/96)," EPA Vice Minister Makoto Kobayashi told a news conference.

But he said growth in the next fiscal year would improve, adding personal consumption was recovering and corporate capital investment, which faltered in July-September, would be positive this business year and might strengthen in 1996/97.

Corporate capital spending fell 1.9 per cent quarter-on-quarter in July-September after a 2.8 per cent rise in the previous three months.

Several private economists agreed with the EPA assessment and said that while the October-December period might show slightly improved growth, a more substantial recovery would have to wait until at least the January-March quarter.

"A stronger and sustainable recovery should happen next year rather than in the fourth quarter (of calendar 1995)," Salomon's Young said.

Exports, a net drag on growth due to the strong yen, might show some improvement in the October-December period.

Arabs urged to invest more in mining industry

DAMASCUS (R) — A senior Arab industrial official urged Arab states Friday to direct more investment to the mining industry to export more processed minerals rather than lower-cost raw mateials.

Mohammad Karbid, secretary-general of the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organisation (AIDMO), said Arabs should also seek cooperation with non-Arab industrial countries.

Speaking to Reuters at the end of the sixth Arab conference for mineral resources held in Damascus, he said Arabs could earn billions of dollars if they sold minerals as manufactured goods.

"Arab states are rich in phosphate, iron, potash, copper, silver, gold, manganese and bauxite which was discovered recently in big quantities in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Karbid said.

He said Morocco, the world's biggest phosphate exporter, selling 22 million tonnes a year, still exported 10 million tonnes in raw material form to the world markets.

"Mauritania is also exporting nine million tonnes of iron per year as raw material with no quantities having any change to be manufactured at home," Mr. Karbid said.

He said AIDMO had prepared a study for the construction of an iron pelletising project in Mauritania which could produce four million tonnes of steel a year.

"This amount could provide the Arab market with 45 per cent of its steel needs," Mr. Karbid said.

Mr. Karbid said the discovery of the bauxite in Saudi Arabia would allow Arab states to have all that was needed to produce aluminium locally.

Saddam calls for fighting inflation

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein urged his government Sunday to fight inflation and slash public spending as part of an economic shake-up, the official news agency INA said.

"One of our current priorities is to use all means to fight inflation, to contain and cut down on government expenditure, develop the state's resources and reactivate its services," President Saddam told a cabinet meeting.

The president, who is also his country's prime minister, said the "failures" who predicted Iraq's economic decline would be proved wrong by the "patience and determination of the Iraqi people."

He ordered his ministers to explain the economic situation to the public through the ruling Baath Party and press to "prevent any misunderstandings which the enemy could exploit."

Analysts: S. Korean political turmoil could affect economy

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea's slush-fund scandal and political turmoil is likely to cast a cloud over the nation's current sizzling growth and hopes of attaining an economic soft-landing next year have dimmed, economic analysts here said Monday.

The central Bank of Korea (BOK) released a gloomy report on the insolvency rate of small- and mid-sized companies, which are most sensitive to the nation's economic conditions.

The number of bankrupt firms totalled 11,412 in the first ten months to October, up 26.6 per cent over the same period last year.

The daily average of firms going bankrupt in October, when the scandal broke out, was much higher than in other months of the year, the bank said.

Meanwhile, the imminent indictment of business magnates implicated in the massive slusb-fund scandal, which saw former President Roh Tae-Woo land in jail on graft charges, bodes ill for the country's economic prospects, an economic think-tank said.

"The fallout of the slush-fund scandal is expected to (render) tbe widely conceived economic soft-landing next year unattainable," said Park Chan-Young with the Samsung Economic Institute (SEI).

The institute predicted that South Korea's economic growth might slump to the six per cent level next year following this year's projected 9.3 per cent rise, if the ripple effects of the scandal drag on.

The BOK earlier predicted South Korea would achieve a soft landing next year with 7.4 per cent growth.

The institute's projection was based on an acute freeze of the kerb market, a major source of small- and mid-sized firms and a planned drastic contraction of investments by the top conglomerates in the wake of the scandal.

The nation's eight leading conglomerates plan to raise average investments by 10 per cent from this year's 20-to-30 per cent year-on-year increase, according to a recent survey by the ministry of finance and economy (MFE).

If the netion's 22 other conglomerates or "chaebols" follow a similar pattern, the decline in corporate investment would conspire to erode 1.3 per cent of the nation's gross national product, the SEI said.

Some 70 per cent of South Korea's economic power is concentrated in the top 30 conglomerates, economic analysts here said.

A BOK official said the insolvency rate was likely to rise in November and December, because of difficulties in procuring funds at the kerb market.

South Korea's kerb market scaled by the MFE at some $75.8 billion or 22 per cent of the nation's GNP red-lighted loans in the wake of the scandal, an association for the small- and mid-sized companies said.

The companies' financial squeeze was reflected by new year calendar printers here, who predicted no repetition of their traditional year-end boom due to a sharp decline in orders.

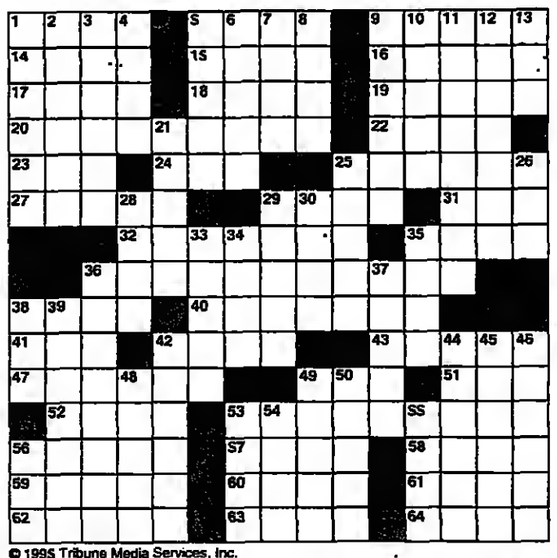
"Companies have shrunk their calendar orders by up to 45 per cent this year," an employee of Samrip Printing Co. was quoted by Maeil Economic Daily as saying.

Korean corporations and banks traditionally distribute free calendars to customers and subcontractors as gifts.

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen

ACROSS
1 Statutes
5 Shopping site
9 Inclines
14 Brainstorm
15 Diva's offering
18 Separated
17 In that case
18 Beatty film
19 Small groups
20 Money from singers Helen and Johnny?
22 Color
23 Previous to
24 Delighted sounds
25 "Rodeo" for one
27 Glacial mass
29 Tribal group
31 Inquire
32 Polishing cloth
35 Having as a hobby
36 Actors Joseph and Sally have a plantation?
38 Luminary
40 Repeats a report
41 Dawn goddess
42 MC's mouthpiece
43 Extols
47 Tometo sauce
49 Inventor's initials
51 Butterfly catcher
52 Pouches
53 Actors Susan and Tom make a short voyage?
56 Lab vessals
57 Montreal player
58 Tommy's gun
59 English poet of old
60 Suggestive look
61 Saarinen
62 Collective farm
63 Org.
64 Speady planas

DOWN
1 Metric meesures in Englend
2 Cling
3 Garden tool
4 Dune stuff
5 Lion-to-lamb month
6 Spaces
7 Toppers
8 Tie down
9 Wickerwork material
10 Calandar word
11 USA to a Hewaiian
12 Complain
13 Aves.
21 Pleasura craft
25 Pesto herb
26 Fight result
28 Acidity
29 Adventure story
30 "Get a —!"
33 Anchor position
34 Submissive
35 "Casablanca" role
36 Rhythm instrument
37 "Oklahoma!" aunt
38 Champagne word
39 Kitchen appliance
42 Sea creature
44 Weds
45 Abandon
48 Office workers
48 Do, re, etc.
49 Kinds
50 Kind of squash
53 Waltar — Mare
54 Former spouses
55 Takes advantage of
56 Govt. gp.



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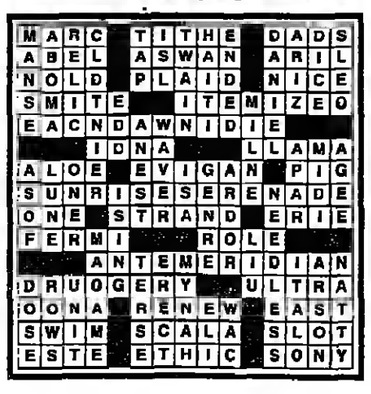
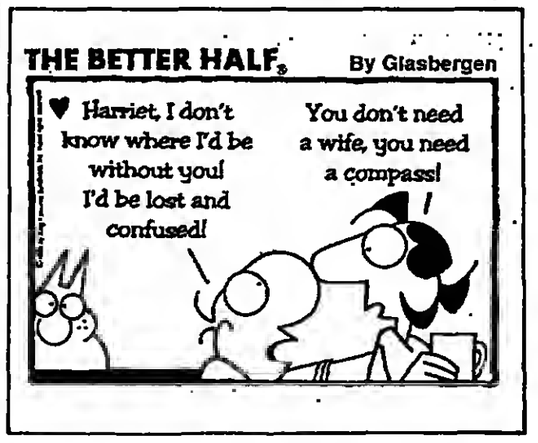
Yesterday's puzzle solved:



THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OLHLE

LATUF

RYPTAN

UNJELG

WHAT THE BALLERINA HAD ON HER COMPETITION.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: HEFTY MUSTY INLAID POLISH
Answer: What the clock watchers dreaded at the board meeting — THE "MINUTES"

Peanuts

Andy Capp

Mutt'n'Jeff

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be certain to adhere to directive of a higher-up in the business world today and you find you can also have more accord with fellow associates.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can add considerably to your present possessions early in the morning today by using special talents cleverly which come from experience.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early this morning make plans which are best for you, then later today carry through in a positive manner. Discuss situations with your loved ones.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Listen to advice at this time of one who is practical which coincides with your own ideas and you can put them in motion.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You know at this time what should be completed to improve your position in the community in which you dwell, so get right at them.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't permit an outside lure to spoil your doing a fine job today at whatever tasks you are engaged in. Later tonight, socialise with friends.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Be sure to keep some business promise you have made early today, but leter tonight yon can be quietly happy with your loved ones.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't enter into any disagreement between a family tie and an outsider since it will soon end. Then you can be happy with friends.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be sure you handle with care today any promises made without interfering with routines. Schedule your time wisely to complete important tasks.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be more concerned with bettering affairs out of town today and having a good time instead of fussing over monetary difficulties.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't do anything which can irk family ties in the morning today. The evening can be very nice if spent with your mate.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Study your business interests today and don't fuss over whatever is unimportant. Don't make any dramatic changes, either.

Birthstone of December: Turquoise — Zircon

Asian press industry told to adapt to changing demands

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Asian newspaper magnates began a three-day meeting here Monday on the problems and prospects of an industry lifted by rising regional affluence and literacy and troubled by growing costs and competition.

"Like all other industries, the newspaper industry is also going through a revolution," Singapore's information minister, George Yeo, told the inaugural Asian Newspaper Publishers Conference and Exhibition.

"The newspaper industry is being submerged into a large and less structured multimedia industry," Mr. Yeo said in a keynote speech to an audience of 350 newspaper owners and executives from 22 countries.

"The electronic media will increasingly compete with the print media. Broadcasting will give way to narrowcasting," Mr. Yeo said.

Mr. Yeo called on news organisations to take a "think globally and act locally" approach to survive and prosper in the face of competition, noting how demands on newspapers changed from country to country.

"Every city has its own quirks, its own tastes, its own sense of humour and its own taboos," the Singapore minister said.

"In Thailand, you cannot show disrespect to the monarchy. In Malaysia, you must be mindful of what Islam disallows. The newspapers and television stations which succeed are those which are closest to local audiences and readers," he added

Media baron Rupert Murdoch's far-flung press empire had succeeded because its different parts were able to "localise," he said, stressing the importance of commercial viability in the news business.

When the Chinese voiced displeasure with BBC World Vision, Mr. Murdoch took it off the STAR TV network, Mr. Yeo said.

"In Hong Kong, as happened in Malaysia and Singapore independence, media owners are already adjusting to a new political reality after 1997," Mr. Yeo said. "To expect otherwise is naive."

Journalists would like to be independent and portray what they wish but in the end "it is the economic reality which is fundamental," the Singapore information minister said.

The delegates are due to discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by the global computer network, the Internet, which is increasingly dissolving national barriers.

Illustrating the impact of the Internet, Mr. Yeo cited the recent rape of a young Okinawan girl by three American G.I.s which he said had led many to wonder whether the attackers were "white, black, brown or yellow."

"The newspapers provided no clue, television pictures gave no indication. In the end, one had a log into Internet to find out. Increasingly, Internet and the proliferation of small media will break up the cartel control of ideas by big newspapers and big TV stations," he said.

Singapore does not disguise its dislike for Western-style freewheeling journalism and has won costly libel suits against foreign publications.

Peter Kann, chairman of Dow Jones and Company Inc., lectured the convention on the failings of American journalism.

He said the lines between journalism and entertainment and news and opinion were being blurred, and the media suffered from a short attention span.

"There are too many instant celebrities and too many two-day crises," he said, citing U.S. opinion polls that rated the press "rather below politicians" in credibility.

The delegates will discuss new opportunities for the newspaper industry presented by Asia's breakneck economic growth and rising literacy, with every percentage point rise in literacy estimated to add 20 million potential new readers.

The world's biggest newsprint suppliers are also at the convention. The cost of paper has soared worldwide, in part because of huge demand in emerging Asian markets.

Forte to float restaurants, sell Savoy stake

LONDON (R) — British hotels group Forte, seeking to ward off a hostile £3.3 billion ($5 billion) bid from Granda, announced plans Monday to demerge its restaurants and cash in on its stake in the luxury Savoy Group.

Forte said the restaurants business would be floated as an independent company, leaving Forte shareholders with a stake in the largest listed British restaurants business and a share in one of the world's leading hotel companies.

"We are creating two focused investment vehicles which are in line with the strategy of the 1990s rather than a 1980-style conglomerate," said Forte director of communications Richard Power.

Forte, in its defence against the bid, has dubbed Granda an outdated "acquisition machine." Granda runs two British commercial television franchises, a string of rental shops for electrical goods and, like Forte, has its own chain of roadside restaurants.

Granda launched its assault on the family-run Forte empire on Nov. 22, offering four new Granada shares and £23.25 ($35.7) for every 15 Forte shares with a 321.67 pence ($4.94) a share cash alternative.

Forte's Power said that the company had been working on the demerger for some time but that Granada's move had forced it to reveal its band earlier than planned.

The restaurant company will operate mainly in Britain and France and include the Little Chef, Happy Eater, Welcome Break and Cote France brands.

Granda chief executive Gerry Robinson was scornful of the Forte move. "This intended demerger is ill-conceived and smacks of desperation in the face of our offer," he said. "There are important synergies between hotels and catering which would be lost through a demerger."

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 1/12/95	Tokyo Close Date 4/12/95
Sterling Pound	1.5310	1.5351**
Deutsche Mark	1.4457	1.4355
Swiss Franc	1.1775	1.1660**
French Franc	4.9980	4.9926**
Japanese Yen	101.19	101.15
European Currency Unit	1.2763	1.2810**

* USD Per STG
** European Opening @ 9.00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 4/12/1995

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.68	5.56	5.37	5.31
Sterling Pound	6.43	6.31	6.18	6.18
Deutsche Mark	3.81	3.68	3.62	3.56
Swiss Franc	2.06	1.87	1.75	1.75
French Franc	6.50	6.50	6.30	6.85
Japanese Yen	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
European Currency Unit	5.43	5.37	5.28	5.21

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Date: 4/12/1995

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	386.60	7.50	Silver	5.20	0.100

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 4/12/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0864	1.0918
Deutsche Mark	0.4930	0.4955
Swiss Franc	0.6074	0.6104
French Franc	0.1423	0.1430
Japanese Yen*	0.6998	0.7027
Dutch Guilder	0.4403	0.4425
Swedish Krona	******	******
Italian Lira*	0.0442	0.0444
Belgian Franc	*****	******

* Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 4/12/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8620	1.8780
Lebanese Lira*	0.044100	0.044600
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1898
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3070	2.3670
Qatari Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2100	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.8330	1.8410
UAE Dirham	0.1922	0.1933
Greek Drachma*	0.2600	0.2807
Cypriot Pound	1.4800	1.5500

* Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3646/56	Canadian dollar
	1.4354/64	Deutschemarks
	1.6076/86	Dutch guilders
	1.1652/62	Swiss francs
	29.51/55	Belgian francs
	4.9996/46	French francs
	1598.1/9.6	Italian lire
	100.90/00	Japanese yen
	6.5620/20	Swedish crowns
	6.3300/91	Norwegian crowns
	5.5591/91	Danish crowns
	1.4127/37	Singapore dollars
	0.7387/92	Australian dollars
	7.7356/66	Hong Kong dollars
One sterling	$1.5330/40	
One ounce of gold	$385.70/386.20	

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 04/12/1995

COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PLC	120	27335	227.250	228.250
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	100	433	4.300	4.330
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	1250	3100	2.450	2.500
THE HOUSING BANK	1150	5172	4.400	4.620
JORDAN GULF BANK	16000	17540	1.100	1.090
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	2760	9419	3.400	3.420
REIT ELMAL SAVINGS&INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	1350	4280	3.200	3.170
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	27400	24326	.890	.890
BANKS SECTOR	50162	91748	INDEX NUMBER: 181.73 CHANGE	: +0.68%
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	200	370	1.850	1.850
INSURANCE SECTOR	200	370	INDEX NUMBER: 129.31 CHANGE	: 0.00%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	30950	49293	1.600	1.600
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	550	952	1.730	1.730
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	800	1678	2.090	2.100
ZARKA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	1850	2142	1.170	1.170
SERVICES SECTOR	34212	54260	INDEX NUMBER: 123.21 CHANGE	: +0.03%
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	3542	12289	3.480	3.470
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	2650	7765	2.930	2.930
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	855	7725	9.050	9.020
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	314	1051	3.310	3.350
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS	150	1065	7.100	7.100
JORDAN DAIRY	200	500	2.500	2.500
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	500	1150	2.330	2.300
RAFIA INDUSTRIES	200	420	2.100	2.100
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	950	4912	5.170	5.170
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	36500	21313	.590	.590
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	4000	5397	1.350	1.350
JORDAN ROCKWOOL INDUSTRIES	200	202	1.020	1.010
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	1050	1794	1.710	1.710
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	1518	4365	2.900	2.880
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	250	428	1.720	1.720
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	4400	5676	1.310	1.290
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRI	950	1525	1.660	1.600
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	58254	77741	INDEX NUMBER: 117.17 CHANGE	: -0.16%
GRAND TOTAL	142828	224119	INDEX NUMBER: 150.26 CHANGE	: +0.36%

NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET : 130963
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET : 115585

DAILY BRIEF

A review of news from the Arabic press

World coffee prices decline but remain high in Jordan

☆☆ THE CONSUMER Protection Society has asked the Ministry of Supply to intervene and return coffee to the list of products which have their prices fixed by the ministry, as traders are not responding to the international decline in coffee prices. In a memorandum sent to the minister, the association said that despite the fact that coffee prices have dropped over the past six months by about 50 per cent of the levels reached in 1994, traders have not reduced prices in accordance with the international trend. "At first, they justified keeping the same prices because they had large quantities in storage but the situation could not be so after the lapse of six months," the memorandum said.

Traders and local importers of coffee said that if international prices keep on falling, prices may drop here, but that could take some time. On the international level, prices of coffee are likely to continue falling over the coming days as a result of speculation among world traders.

The head of the association of foodstuff traders said the association is continuously asking coffee merchants to reduce prices whenever world prices decline. He added that if the merchants do not lower prices on their own during the coming few days, the association will send a circular to all coffee merchants stressing the need to lower prices. However, he noted that prices were still unstable and fluctuating and, as such, it is difficult to arrive at a stable price for the consumer. Prices of first grade coffee currently range between JD 4.800 and JD 4.600 a kilogramme which prices of robusta coffee range between JD 4.400 and JD 4.200 a kilogramme.

The ministry stressed that lower international prices should reflect on lower prices on the local market. A ministry official said that the ministry will be asking merchants to reduce prices which have been floated long time ago (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

Royal Wings to start flights to Aqaba from January 1996

☆☆ A NEW airline will be launched next year to meet increasing demand for transport services between Middle East countries, an airline official said Monday. Ramzi Shweihat, managing director of Arab Wings, said the new firm will offer shuttle services between Amman and neighbouring cities such as Cairo, Damascus, Tel Aviv and the Palestinian autonomous Gaza Strip. "The initial stage will include trips to the Red Sea resort of Aqaba until we agree with neighbouring countries on arrangements for operating the new carrier," Mr. Shweihat said. The capital for the new airline, Royal Wings, has not yet been specified. But it will be financed by the national carrier, Royal Jordanian, and its affiliate, Arab Wings. Mr. Shweihat said small planes with a capacity of 50 passengers will be leased for the new services (AP).

Consumer Protection Society threatens to take TCC to court

☆☆ THE CONSUMER Protection Society requested the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) to honour the agreements with telephone subscribers that specify the number of free telephone calls entitled to each subscriber. The society said any change should be limited to new subscribers and should not affect old subscribers. In a memorandum to the TCC's director-general, the society said that many people are asking the society to intervene and stop the corporation from cancelling all free phone calls benefitting limited income groups. It added that by lowering charges for international phone calls, the TCC would only be benefitting people of high-income group. The memorandum warned that if the TCC insists on cancelling the free calls, the society will be forced to take the matter to court for a final say on the agreement between the subscribers and the TCC (Al Dustour)

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Snowboarding skates on thin ice at Winter Olympics

KARUIZAWA, Japan (AFP) — The International Olympic Committee (IOC) executive board opened a four-day meeting here Monday to add the trendy mountain resort pastime of snowboarding to the Olympic lineup.

But the move will add to the burdens of the 1998 Winter Games in nearby Nagano and will not necessarily ensure its future.

The Nagano organisers finally agreed to the proposal from IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch to accept snowboarding- on condition that 60 per cent of the 1.3 billion yen ($13 million) cost of the extra event be paid by the IOC and the International Ski Federation (FIS).

Samaranch has called snowboarding — which started in American ski resorts around two decades ago — "a very important winter sport."

"In Europe and maybe in Japan, more than 50 per cent of young people are on snowboards," Samaranch said during a previous trip to Japan in August. "It would be a pity if Nagano was not the first to accept snowboard."

Snowboarding, a fast growing industry with widespread television appeal, is expected to be approved as an Olympic event on Tnesday when Nagano organisers report on preparations for the 1998 Games, now expanded to a record 68 events in seven sports.

Curling and women's ice hockey also been added to the Nagano programme. The operational budget has been hiked from 40 billion yen to 76 billion yen and threatens to top 100 billion yen.

Organisational problems also remain as the International Ski Federation has to deal with the International Snowboard Federation (ISF) in bringing the world's best snowboarders to Nagano.

With 6,500 licensed members, the ISF is not affiliated to the IOC but does control the sport's World Pro Tour. The ISF has yet to decide, though, on whether it will let members compete in the Olympics.

"There has been heated debate and the ISF's continental branches will shortly discuss what they should do," said Shigeru Yamada, secretary general of the Japan Snowboard Association (JSBA).

Yamada said his association would cooperate with the Japanese Ski Federation.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch presides an IOC Executive Board meeting in Karuizawa, Nagano, where the 1998 Winter Games are due to be held (Reuters photo)

Weah keeps AC Milan clear

PARIS (AFP) — George Weah scored a last-minute winner at Lazio at the weekend as AC Milan pulled four points clear at the top of the Italian league but Barcelona missed a golden chance to take over at the top in Spain.

Paris St. Germain stayed comfortably clear in France despite a goalless draw at Gungamp and Borussia Dortmund retained a two lead over Bayer Munich in Germany after scoring a 3-1 home win over Munich 1860.

Weah, in his first season in the Serie A after his transfer from Paris Saint Germain in France, netted the only goal against Lazio to silence the 60,000 home fans and take his side to 27 points.

The quicksilver Liberian frontrunner was put through with only goalkeeper Francesco Mancini to beat and he made no mistake — firing home a low shot. Iyt was his fifth league goal of the season.

Second-placed Parma managed only draw at Napoli — Gianfranco Zola's 47th minute penalty cancelling the home side's opener from Fausto Pizzi.

Disgruntled Parma coach Nevio Scala said after the match: "A team going for the championship title has to do better than that."

Fiorentina, meanwhile, leapfrogged over Lazio to move into third on 22 points thanks to their answer to Weah — the Argentinian striker Gabriel Batistuta.

Batistuta, the league's top scorer last season with 26 strikes, left it late as well, settling the match against Padova 1-0 with ten minutes with an 18m shot. It was his sixth goal of the season.

Inter Milan remained unbeaten under new English coach Roy Hodgson by winning 2-0 against Cremonese and Juventus went on a goal spree in their derby match with Torino.

A hat-trick from Gianluca Vialli did the damage as Jnventus scored a 5-0 win. Their other scorers were Ciro Ferrera and Fabrizio Ravanelli.

In Spain, Barcelona, didn't take their chances on Saturday and settled for a 1-I home draw against lowly Santander — hut if they had won they would have gone top of the table.

For 24 hours later pacesetters Atletico Madrid slumped to only their second defeat of the season going down 2-1 at Betis — Croatian defender Robert Jarni and Luigi Pier giving the home side a 2-0 lead by half-time. Bulgarian Luboslav Penev pulled one back for Atletico in the second-half — but it was not enough.

Denmark might host 2004 Olympics

COPENHAGEN (R) — Denmark's Olympic committee said on Monday it had formally applied for government support for a bid for Copenhagen to host the 2004 Summer Olympic Games and awaited a decision hy mid-December.

"We have submitted a proposal to the government for Copenhagen to be host city for the 2004 Olympics and understand we will hear in 10 days," Bent Agerskov, seeretary-general of Denmark's National Olympic Committee said.

He said any bid would also have to receive the backing of Copenhagen City Council.

3 French players fail dope tests

PARIS (R) — Three French soccer players, including two international have failed dope tests this season, the national soccer federation said on Monday.

Federation President Claude Simonet confirmed reports in the sports daily L'Equipe about the three cases but suggested so-called recreational drugs were involved and that there was no evidence to suggest players were trying to cheat.

Bordeaux reserve goalkeeper Franck Fontan was suspended for two months on Thursday but no action has yet been taken against the other two players — Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez and Stephane Paille, formerly of Mulhouse — pending the results of B sample tests.

Simonet declined to say which drugs were involved in the tests. "There are two separate problems. There are players who try to enhance their performances and others who are victims of a habit of using banned substances," he said.

"There is no widespread taking of performance-enhancing substances here. I don't think we are talking about cheats in these cases."

Barthez, who failed his test after a league match in Nantes on October 3, refused to comment. The Monaco goalkeeper, who won the European Cup with Marseille two years ago, is currently second choice behind Bernard Lama in the national team.

Paille, a much-travelled international striker who has played abroad for Porto in Portugal and Servette in Switzerland, retired from the sport after failing a test on September 23 following a second division game with Niort.

Bnt he told L'Equipe his retirement was due to serious peronal problems and had nothing to do with the affair.

Simonet said that B sample tests requested by both players had been taken and that the results were expected this week.

Fontan was found to be positive after the Bordeaux V Montpellier match on September 22 when he was selected for a random test even though he was only on the substitutes' bench.

Bordeaux club President Alain Afflelou said Fontan would not be paid for the two months of his suspension.

"It's unacceptable," he said. "I take this very badly because when you're 21 and a professional, yon should be careful. By letting himself go at a party, he's penalised the team and damaged the reputation of the clnh."

Last year, another French player, Stephane Ziani of Bastia, was handed a one-month suspended ban after failing a dope test while playing for Nantes.

Arab Clubs Championship

Kuwait's Kathima overcome Wihdat

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Kuwaiti champions Kathima Monday almost dashed Al Wihdat's hopes at the IIth Arab Clnhs Soeeer Championship when they scored a 3-2 victory over the Jordanian champions in their match at Riyadh's Malaz Stadium.

Al Wihdat, who had also lost their opening match I-0 to Algeria's Bluzdad, played a good match and displayed a noticeable improvement in their form.

After Kathima won the first half 2-I and took a 3-1 lead towards the end of the match, Al Wihdat's repeated attacks paid off when they scored their second goal. The Kuwaiti team however, managed to hold on to their lead before Al Wihdat could score an equalising goal.

Hosted hy Al Nasr Club of Riyadh, the competition groups 10 top teams divided into two groups.

Group A includes Algeria's Bluzdad, Kuwait's Kathima, Yemen's Al Wihdeh, hosts Al Nasr in addition to Al Wihdat.

Group B includes Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia, Tunisia's Al Tarajji, Bahrain's Rifa' Maghrebi, Sudan's Al Hilal and Palestine's Jabal Al Mukabber.

The Palestinian team was a late replacement in the group after Syria's Al Horrieh announced their withdrawal.

Only the top two teams in each group will advance to the semifinal round.

In earlier matches Bahrain's Al Rifa' beat Palestine's Jabal Al Mukabber, while Saudi Arabia's Al Nasr beat Yemen's Al Wihdeh 4-0.

Kathima win over Al Wihdat was their second as they beat Al Wihdeh 4-1. Algeria's Bluzdad also have two wins after beating hosts Al Nasr 1-0 in the opening match and Al Wihdat by the same result.

Al Wihdat next play Yemen's Al Wihdeh Wednesday.

Al Wihdat's delegation includes 22 players: Yousef Al Ammouri, Naser Ghandonr, Jihad Ahdul Mune'm, Isam Mahmoud, Ahdallah Ahu Zame'h, Faisal Ihrahim, Samer Bahlouz, Sufyan Abdallah, Jamal Mahmoud, Munir Abu Hantash, Marwan Al Shamali, Khaled Al Majdalawi, Othman Barhoumeh, Adnan Al Tawil, Walid Mikha'il, Ra'fat Ali, Yaser Ahu Johar, Mohammad Afif, Shaher Hamdan, Hisham Abdul Mune'm and Mohammad Al Hawi.

Schedule of Wihdat's remaining matches

Wednesday 6/12 ..... Wihdat-Wihdeh
Friday 8/12 ..... Wihdat-Nasr

Street wins 6th consecutive downhill

LAKE LOUISE, Alberta (R) — Picabo Street is back with a vengeance.

The defending Alpine ski World Cup women's downhill champion from the United States picked up Sunday where she left off last season, winning the first womeu's downhill race of the season.

"I ran the line I wanted to today and skied the way I wanted to ski and proved to myself once again that I know best for myself," Street said.

"I came out of yesterday pretty bummed out because I had bad luck with the weather but more so didn't really ski aggressively," she said.

"I skied with my little tiger out, that had kind of been hiding inside of me somewhere," Street said. "I had to find him and bring him to the surface and ski that way today.

"I wanted to try and find that rage in me again."

Street, 24, ripped up the 2,338-metre, 31-gate course in a time of one minute 26.61 seconds.

Street, who won one of two downhills rnn at Lake Louise, Canada last season and whose win was her sixth consecutive dating back to Cortina, Italy, last year, bettered Germany's Katja Seizinger by .43 seconds.

Russian Warwara Zelenskaja was third in 1:27.30. Italy's Bihiana Perez was fourth in 1:27.52, while Swiss surprise Madlen Summermatter was fifth in I:27.55 from the field of 55 starters and 49 finishers.

The race was a make-up for Saturday's attempt, when a snowstorm wiped out the downhill race after 29 racers from a field of 55 had left the starting gate.

Al-Futtaim

The Al-Futtaim Group, Dubai, UAE, one of the largest end most diversified business houses in the Gulf, seeks to fill the following position for its subsidiery compeny, Auto & Machinery Company (Famco). The company is involved in the sales, distribution and efter sales service of Volvo, Euclid, OK earth moving equipment. Volvo trucks end buses, Yanmer diesel engines and Ingersoll-Rand compressors/machinery and parts.

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132 AND 33KV SWITCHGEAR, 33KV CAPACITOR BANKS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT FOR TAREQ 132/33KV SUBSTATION

Jordan Electricity Authority announces the availability of tender documents for Tender No. 114/95 for Design, Manufacture, Testing and Supply C&F Aqaba and guarantee of 132kv & 33kv Switchgear, 33kv Capacitor Banks and Ancillary Equipment for establishment of Tareq 132/33kv substation.

Contractors who are interested to participate in this tender can obtain the tender documents from the Tenders Department at JEA-Main Building (located between the 6th & the 7th circles, Jabal Amman) starting from Tuesday 5.12.1995 against a non-refundable amount of JD300 for each set of Tender Document.

Bids to be submitted to the secretary of tendering committee at the above address not later than 12.00 noon of Monday, 26.12.1995.

A bid bond equal to a Hundred Thousand Jordanian Dinars should be accompanied with the offer.

Director General
Dipl. Eng. M.S. Arafeh

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Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA CONCORD TEL: 677420
CONCORD "1"
Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi and Mahmoud Hamideh ...in A Woman Who shook the Throne of Egypt
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
Sylvester Stallone..in ASSASSINS
Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15

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Milwaukee Gucks' Glenn Robinson (right) shoots over Vancouver Grizzlies' Antonio Harvey during 2nd half action of their game in Vancouver (Reuters photo)

Cavs win in OT; Magic lose

NEW YORK (R) — Anthony Mason scored 19 points and grabbed 11 rebounds and Hobert Davis added 18 points as the New York Knicks continued their mastery of Washington with a 107-83 rout of the Bullets on Sunday.

Rookie Rasheed Wallace led the Bullets with 15 points.

Charles Oakley had 16 points and 16 rebounds fnr the Knicks.

"I have no respect for them because they have nn respect for me," said Oakley.

"He is one of the true pleasures coaching here," said Knicks coach Don Nelson of Oakley.

In Cleveland, Chris Mills scored all of his 22 points after halftime and Dan Majerle snapped a tie with a driving layup with 1:59 remaining in overtime to give the Cleveland Cavaliers a 108-107 victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

The Cavaliers blew a seven-point lead in the final 4:19 nf the fourth quarter, but Mills forced overtime with a three-pointer with nine seconds left in the period, then scored Cleveland's first three points of overtime.

In Pnrtland, Clifford Robinson scored 22 points and rookie Randolph Childress added a season-high 18 off the bench as the Portland Trail Blazers used a big fourth quarter to defeat the Orlando Magic, 93-82.

Portland trailed 71-69 with 10 minotes tn play when Childress nailed a three-pointer that began a 15-0 run.

In Tornnto, Alnnzo Mourning scored 15 of his 28 points in the decisive fourth quarter as the Miami Heat defeated the Toronto Raptors, 112-94, for their fifth straight victory.

Billy Owens scored 28 points and Bimbo Coles added 18 for the Heat.

Miami held a three-point lead with 8:17 remaining but reeled nff 13 straight points — nine by Mourning — for a 98-82 advantage with 4:20 to play.

In Vancouver, Vin Baker had 27 points and 15 rebounds and Glenn Robinson added 22 points as the Milwaukee Bucks never trailed and handed the expansion Vancouver Grizzlies their 15th straight loss, 109-95.

The Bucks scored the first eight points and never looked back, leading by as many as 24 points late in the third quarter.

NBA RESULTS

Milwaukee	109	Vancouver	95
Miami	112	Toronto	94
New York	107	Washington	83
Cleveland	108	Dallas	107 (OT)
Portland	93	Orlando	82
LA Lakers	104	Indiana	96

Jordan, Tyson biggest-earning athletes

NEW YORK (AFP) — Michael Jordan and Mike Tyson, who both made celebrated comebacks this year, top the Forbes Magazioe's 1995 list of the world's 40 biggest earners in sport.

Jnrdan, who pocketed $43.9 millinn agaiost Tyson's $40 million, returned to the National Basketball Association's (NBA's) Chicago Bulls in March after an 18-month retirement. His total income came from $3.9 million in salary and $40 million in endorsements.

Tyson's total all came from prizemoney. Nobody wanted to sponsor the former world heavyweight boxing champion, whose three-year prison sentence for rape ended in March. Tyson's main income came from an 89-second disqualification victory over Peter McNeeley in August.

Tyson might yet surpass Jordan before January 1 providing his fight against Buster Mathis Jnr goes ahead in Philadelphia on December 16.

Jordan has made $170 million since 1990 and he may feature in the world's '400 wealthiest' list which Forbes releases later this month.

Deion Sanders, who plays both baseball and American football, was a distant third at $22.5 million while the WBO's heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe was fourth after banking $22.2 million.

Formula-one champion Michael Schomacher nf Germany was the richest non-American listed. He earned $15 million to finish in ninth place — $500,000 more than Canada's ice hockey super-star Wayne Gretzky.

Steffi Graf, the world's joint number-one tennis player, was the only woman to be listed. She was in 30th place with earnings of $7.5 million. In men's tennis world number-one Pete Sampras finished down in 15th spot with $11.2 million — eight places behiod his rival Andre Agassi. Agassi made $13 million of his $16 million income from endorsements.

In all, the list included eight American football and baseball players, six NBA players, five tennis players, five boxers and four racing drivers.

Top moneymakers on list of the highest money earners among sports figures for 1995

1. Michael Jordan (USA/basketball)	$43.9 million
2. Mike Tyson (USA/boxing)	40
3. Deion Sanders (USA/baseball-Amfoot)	22.5
4. Riddick Bowe (USA/boxing)	22.5
5.Shaquille O'Neal (USA/basketball)	21.9
6. George Foreman (USA/boxing)	18
7. Andre Agassi (USA/tennis)	16
8. Jack Nicklaus (USA/golf)	15.1
9. Michael Schumacher (Ger/F1)	15
10. Wayne Gretzky (Can/ice hockey)	14.5
11. Arnold Palmer (USA/golf)	14.1
12. Drew Bledsoe (USA/Amfootball)	13.9
13. Gerhard Berger (Aut/F1)	13.5
14. Evander Holyfield (USA/boxing)	13
15. Pete Sampras (USA/tennis)	11.2
16. Cal Ripken (USA/baseball)	10.3
17. Greg Norman (Aus/golf)	9.7
18. Daid Robinson (USA/basketball)	9.6
19. Patrick Ewing (USA/basketball)	9.5
20. Dale Earnhardt (USA/motor-racing)	8.4
21. Boris Becker (Ger/tennis)	7.8
22. Hakeem Olajowon (USA/basketball)	7.8
23. Michael Chang (USA/tennis)	7.6
24. Steffi Graf (Ger/tennis)	7.5
25. Charles Barkley (USA/basketball)	7.1

Pittsburgh, Kansas City clinch NFL division championships

NEW YORK (AP) — Pittsburgh and Kansas City clinched NFL divisinn championships no Sunday and except for Norv Turner, the Dallas Cowboys might have been in the playoffs, too.

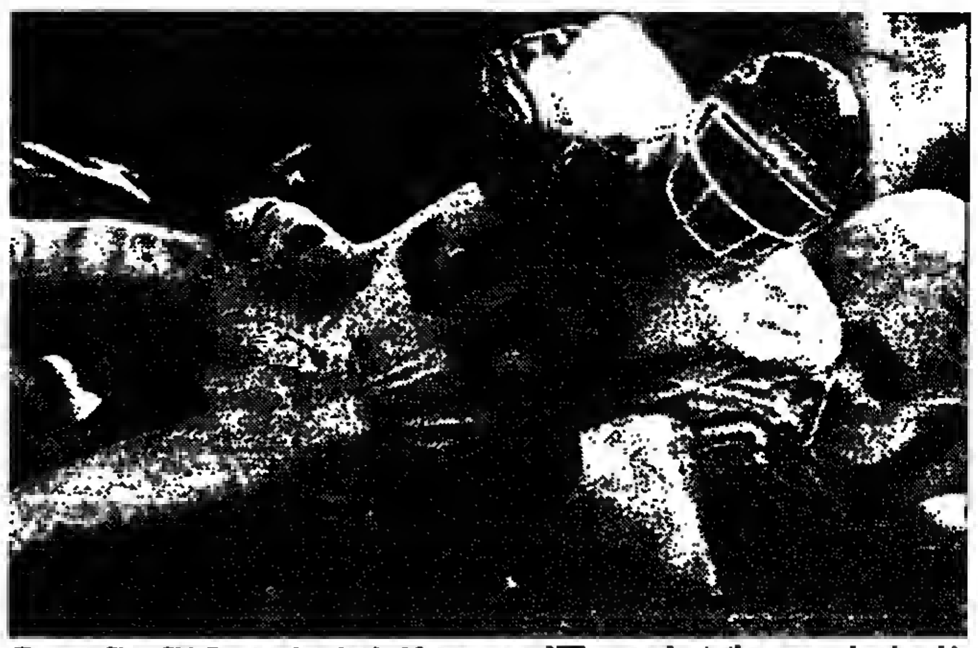
Turner, nffensive coordinator for two Dallas Super Bowl champinns, coached Washington to a 24-17 victory and a season's sweep of the Cowboys. Dallas is 10-3 for the season but 0-2 against Turner's Redskins.

Pittsburgh extended the league's lnngest winning streak to six games, defeating Houston 21-7 and clinching the AFC central title. Kansas City got a season-high 124 yards from 35-year-old Marcus Allen and wrapped op the AFC West with a 29-23 victory over Oakland.

In other games, it was Denver 31, Jacksonville 23; San Diego 31, Cleveland 13; Seattle 26, Philadelphia 14; Carolioa 13, Indianapolis 10; Green Bay 24, Cincinnati 10; Miami 21, Atlanta 20; New Orleans 31, New England 17; St. Louis 23, the New Ynrk Jets 20; and Minnesota 31, Tampa Bay 17.

San Francisco beat Buffalo 27-17 at night.

Chiefs 29, Raiders 23: The Chiefs (11-2) wno their second AFC West title in three years as Allen became the first player in the NFL's 77-year history to run for more than 10,000 yards and catch 5,000 yards in passes. It was Kansas City's fifth straight victory and 12th in 13 games against the Raiders.



Kansas City Chief's running back Marcus Allen (32) is brought down after gaining a first down against the Oakland Raiders. Allen set an NFL record at the game, logging his 10,000th yard rushing, with 5,000 of them from passes (Reuters photo)

Steelers 21, Oilers 7: Pittsburgh stretched its winning streak to an NFL-high six games and wrapped op its third AFC Ceotral championship in coach Bill Cowher's fnur seasons. Neil O'Donnell threw a pair of first-half touchdown passes and Bam Morris ran for 102 yards and a late fnurth-qoarter tnnchdnwn. The Steelers wrapped up the division title faster than in any season since their four Super Bowl runs during the 1970s.

Redskins 24, Cowboys 17: Terry Allen scored two touchdowns and Heath Shuler passed for another as Washington (4-9) snapped a four-game losing streak. The Redskins beat Dallas 27-23 in the fifth game of the season when Allen scored twice and gained 123 yards.

Broncos 31, Jaguars 23: Jnhn Elway compensated for Denver's poor special teams play, passing for four touchdowns as the Broncos improved their playoff hopes. Denver (7-6) is tied with Indianapolis and Miami for the fioal twn AFC wild-card slots.

Chargers 31, Browns 13: Rookie Aaron Hayden, replacing injured Natrone Means, rnshed 32 times for 127 yards and his first two NFL touchdowns as San Diego kept its faint playoff hopes alive with its second win in six days.

Seahawks 26, Eagles 14: Seattle used a career-best four field goals by Todd Peterson to beat Philadelphia, which lost for just the second time in nine games. The Seahawks have won four nf the last five.

Panthers 13, Colts 10: Carnlinia won its sixth game and fourth straight at hnme, using a face mask penalty by Derwin Gray to set np Jnhn Kasay's 38-yard winning field goal. The Panthers sacked Jim Harbangh, the NFl's top-rated passer, six times, knocking him from the game with a sprained knee.

Packers 24, Bengals 10: Brett Favre threw three touchdowns and completed 31 nf 43 passes for 339 yards, his fifth 300-yard game this year and 10th of his career. Favre beeame the third-fastest quarterback in NFL history to reach 100 career touchdown passes, reaching the plateau in his 62nd game. The record nf 44 games was set by Dan Marino from 1983-86. Jnhnny Unitas did it in 53 games from 1956-60.

Dolphins 21, Falcons 20: Marinn Threw a 21-yard tnuchdown pass to Irving Fryar with 11 seconds left and Miami rallied with two touchdowns in the last eight minntes to eod a three-game losing streak.

Vikings 31, Buccaneers 17: Minnesnta's defenee had eight sacks to overpower Tampa Bay. Quarterback Treot Dilfer absorbed six sacks before being ejected fnr fighting with taekle John Randle. The Vikings got a 66-yard tnuchdown run from Amp Lee, the lnngest nf his career, and Warren Moon had toochdown passes nf 27 and 60 yards tn Cris Carter.

Rams 23, Jets 20: Stymied for most fn the day, Isaac Bruce broke free for a pair of touchdown catches tn lead St. Lonis. Bruce, the league's leading receiver in passing yardage, wasn't a factnr for nearly three quarters. But he caught touchdowns of one and 11 yards from backup Mark Rypleo and finished with six receptinns for 69 yards.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A K Q 10 7 2
♥ 10 6 3
♦ K 2
♣ 6 2

WEST
♠ J
♥ K J 7 5
♦ 8 6 5
♣ K J 9 4 3

EAST
♠ 9 8 6 4 3
♥ A Q 9 8 2
♦ Void
♣ 10 7 8

SOUTH
♠ 5
♥ 4
♦ A Q J 10 9 7 4 3
♣ A Q 5

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♣	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
6 ♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

SAVE THE BASTILLE!

When the hordes are ready to storm the citadel, one reaction is to panic. A more sensible alternative is to find a way to blunt the assault.

We could build a strong case for a jump to two spades by North on the first round. As a result of the delayed jump, the auction was crowded and the final bid was a hit or miss action that worked out well in practice.

Since the auction suggested that North-South did not possess a first-round heart control, the lead of the king of hearts by West to take a look at dummy has a lot to recommend it. A spade shift by West at trick two would then have led to the contract's demise.

The opening spade lead proved just as deadly at the table. Afraid of a ruff, declarer hastened to draw trumps by leading low to the ace. Had trumps divided 2-1, all would have been well. After drawing another round of trumps, ending in dummy, declarer would have been able to run the spades for all the discards needed. As it was, West was able to ruff the second spade as declarer discarded a heart, but South still had to lose two club tricks for down two.

Let's suppose declarer allowed West to ruff a spade at trick two, discarding a heart from hand. Now declarer would have been able to win any return, draw trump ending on the table, then use the spade suit to obtain two club discards. Making six-odd!

Graf pays $17m in taxes

BONN (AFP) — World oumber one tennis player Steffi Graf had allegedly paid 25 million Dentschemarks ($17 millioo) in extra tax since investigations into her financial affairs began in May, German weekly magazine Der Spiegel claimed in its Monday editions.

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Qweider launches Eau Legere and Olympios

In a press conference held at the Mamott Hotel Qweider Trading Est. heralded a new era of perfumes in Jordan's markets.

Eau Legere from Sonia Rykeil for women and Olympios from Missoni for men.

Ali Qweider, the General Manager of Qweider Trading Est., gave a brief look on the new product and its launching company. During the meeting, Mr. Qweider answered questions from the reporters and guests.

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Mohammad Othman Sidiq, conductor
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Army soldier charged in Rabin killing probe

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — An Israeli soldier was indicted in military court on Monday on charges stemming from the investigatioo of the killing of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The soldier, First Sergeant Arik Schwartz of the crack Golani infantry brigade, was the first person to be formally charged in connection with the case.

Army radio, reporting the proceedings in Haifa military court, mentioned only one of the seveo charges against Sgt. Schwartz — supplyiog army weapons to confessed assassin Yigal Amir and his brother Hagai Amir for use in planned attacks against Arabs.

It was unclear from the radio report whether miltiary prosecutors had alleged any direct liok hetween Sgt. Schwartz and the killing of the prime minister.

A military spokesman had no immediate comment on the radio report.

Covering his face with his army coat, Sgt. Schwartz said as he passed reporters that, "it is oot right what is happening here," according to Israel radio.

His father, Naftali, a dentist from the religious Tel Aviv suburb of Boei Brak, said his soo was innoceot and called the indictment "heartbreakiog."

The charge sheet said that during the past year, Sgt. Schwartz smoggled weapons and army equipment from his army hase and gave them to Amir and Hagai, knowing the two planned to attack Arabs.

The indictmeot said Schwartz also huried stolen army property, including weapons, in his hack yard. After Mr. Rabin's assassinatison, Schwartz took those weapons and hid them in the home and car of another army sergeant, according to the charges.

Police found weapoos and explosives in the Amir family home in Herzliya, near Tel Aviv.

Schwartz' trial was set for Dec. 12.

The three key suspects in the Rahin assassination — the Amir brothers and a friend, Dror Adani — were to be charged later this week.

Fonr other suspects have beeo released into house arrest, and it was not clear yet whether they would be eventually charged.

Israel's police minister, Moshe Shahal, initially said he believed Mr. Rabin was the victim of a carefully hatched plot by right-wing extremists, hut later said there apparently was no conspiracy.

In Monday's inquiry commissioo hearing, one of the police officers who overpowered Yigal Amir after the shooting said the gunman complained all the time that police were hurting him.

Officer Amran Ronen on Monday recoimted the following conversatioo with the gunman.

Amir: "My brother, take the handcuffs of me."

Rooen: "What do yoo mean by calling me your brother?"

Amir: "I'm not an Arab. I, too, served in Golani."

Another police witness, Major Yona Zari, told the three-member panel that six of his officers surrounded Shimon Peres, at the time the foreign minister, as he left the peace rally.

He was theo showo a photograph of Mr. Peres walking to his waiting car, alooe. Amir has said he had also plaooed to kill Mr. Peres, hut changed his plans when Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres left the rally separately.

"Until this second I had no idea there was anythiog wrong in connection with my meo," Maj. Zari said.

The iocideot reflected the confusion that prevailed at the rally among different security units.

One of the commission members, law professor Arieh Rosen-Zvi, asked Maj. Zari if a clearer chain of command was not called for at such large-scale events. Maj. Zari acknowledged that this was the obvious conclnsion. "You can't argue with facts," he said.

On Sunday, Amir said he carried secrets that "will destroy everything," and hinted he got help from one of the prime minister's bodyguards.

"Everything until now was a mask," Amir said. The truth about the slaying, he said, would "turn the country npside down."

Amir also said anthorities killed the bodyguard, who he said helped him by creating confusion during the Nov. 4 shooting at a Tel Aviv peace rally.

"Why don't you publicise that they killed one of Rabin's bodyguards? The one who shouted 'the bullets are dummies'," Amir yelled to reporters as he was hronght into a Tel Aviv courtroom to have his detention extended.

Amir, 25, has until now insisted that he acted alone, and previous reports indicated he shouted himself that the bullets were fake. No evidence has surfaced to support his claim that a Rabin bodyguard was killed.

Amir made the commeots while eotering court. He wore a white T-shirt with a gray sweater draped over his shoulders.

"i did not think they would start killing people," he mnttered in court.

"You are killing people," reproted Judge Dan Arbel.

"If I tell the truth, it would turn the country upside down," Amir said, waving his hand dismissively and sitting down.

A governmeot spokesman called Amir's commeots "nonsense."

Mr. Rabin's daughter criticised the media on Monday for paying too much attentioo to statements from his confessed assassin.

"The media is committing an error wheo it gives the assassin the chance to express his opinions everytime he is brought before the courts," Dalia Filosof-Rabin said on television.

Since his arrest on the night of the murder, Amir has made repeated statements to reporters while in court to justify the assassination.

The respected Israeli writer, Amos Oz, complained that Amir "holds veritable press conferences where he tries to vindicate his crime."

Yemen wants GCC to consider its entry

SANAA (R) — A Yemeni newspaper urged the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit in Oman on Monday to discuss Sanaa's admission into the six-nation confederation.

The call came days after Yemeo's Parliameotary Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Ben Hussein Al Ahmar said Yemen felt its natural place should be within the GCC despite strained relatioos with some of its members since the 1990 Gulf crisis.

Al Thawra daily said Yemeo's location at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula would help boost security and stability across the Arab Gulf region, the world's main oil supplier.

"The summit has to discuss conditions to open the membership door for Yemen to join the GCC," it said.

"It is the doty of the summit to discuss all means to boost security and stability and to objectively weigh its options oo labour, joint defence and security," it added.

"Utilising Yemen's geographic location to consolidate security io the Arahiao Peninsula and in the Gulf is an issue of ntmost importance at the summit in light of the speedy developments and experiences that faced the regioo since the GCC was formed."

Yemen's ties with GCC states, especially Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, were damaged because of Sanaa's sympathy with Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Relations with Saudi Arabia have gradually improved since then hut strains still persist with Kuwait.

The GCC groups Saudia Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman.

Yemen joined Jordan, Iraq and Egypt in the short-lived Arah Cooperation Council, an economic hloc founded in the 1980s that collapsed after the Gulf crisis.

GULF SUMMIT: Oman's Soltan Qaboos Ben Sa'id (right) on Monday receives United Arah Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Beo Sultan Al Nahayan opon his arrival in Moscat to attend the annual summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which gronps Oman and the UAE with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Knwait (see page one) (Reuter photo)

Thuneibat: No Brotherhood participation in government

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Muslim Brotherhood leader Abdul Majid Thuneibat on Sunday lashed out at what he described as the government's plans to curh press freedoms and declared that the movement would not participate in the government even if it were asked to. He also said that the movement would employ all peaceful means to counter all efforts aimed at "muzzling" the press or "repressing" public liberties.

Mr. Thuneibat's comments came amid reported governmeot moves to tighten the Press and Publications Law and scale down the powers exercised hy professional associations. His Majesty King Hussein has expressed dissatisfaction over the work of professional associations and the press in general. The King called on the "silent majority" to come out and express its support for peace and he instructed the government to ask the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution to rule on the legality of the powers exercised hy the professional associations.

Followiog the Kiog's speech, the government said it will introduce amendmeots to the Press and Publications Law. The amendments are expected to impose more restrictions on all publications.

"The government's attack oot only violated the freedom of assembly within the associations and political parties that have been protected hy the Constitution, hut also the freedom of expression," Mr. Thuneibat said at a press conference held at the Brotherhood's headquarters. "A oew press and publications law that gives the executive authority the right to ban, suspend and close publications is now in the making."

The proposed amendments to the Press and Publications Law, as made known to the Jordan Times, are expected to empower the government to close down newspapers and demand that chief editors be serving members of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) for at least seven years. The amendments also impose an imprisonment of three months to three years for violations of the law.

In addition, the amendmeots cancel a provision that sets the government's share in the equity of any newspaper at not more than 30 per cent. The government now owns 61 per cent in the Jordan Press Foundation that publishes Al Ra'i newspaper and 35 per cent in the Jordanian Company for Press and Publication that publishes Al Dustour.

"In hrief, what is happening is a reversal on democracy, a coup against the institutions and oppression on individuals," Mr. Thuneihat asserted. In this atmosphere, "it is tbe whims and moods (of officials) and not laws and regulations that will rule."

According to Mr. Thuoeihat, Jordan is reoeging on its commitment towards democracy and public freedoms.

"It is the political parties, professional associations, press, clubs and mosques that assume respoosihility in" shapiog policies, he said. "But the governments in our

(Continued on page 7)

Egyptian police round up Brotherhood campaigners

CAIRO (Agencies) — Police on Monday arrested 18 campaign workers for a Muslim brotherhood candidate running in a secood round of legislative elections, police officials said.

The followers of Mukhtar Nuh, the most senior Brotherhood memher and candidate to survive the first round vote held last Wednesday, were detained in dawn raids on their homes in Mr. Nuh's Cairo voting district of Matariya, they said.

Mr. Nuh, the treasurer of the Brotherhood-led Egyptian Lawyers Union, was one of only 25 Brotherhood candidates who managed to cling on to reach the run-offs, to be held on Wednesday.

The opposition has cried foul after its candidates failed to win a single seat in the first round, which saw the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) sweep up 123 of the 137 seats so far decided. The remaining 14 went to independents, most of them former NDP members.

A total 307 seats are up for grabs in the run-offs in which 66 opposition hopefuls, including the Brotherhood, are still left.

Nearly 2,000 Brothethood followers were arrested in the days leading up to the first-round poll and during the voting itself. And the oppositioo also accused the government of widespread vote rigging.

Meanwhile, an Interior Ministry official said a total of 17 people died duriog violence connected to last Wednesday's vote. Security sources earlier said more than 80 were wounded during the poll and the next day.

Fourteen died in provinces io the northern Delta, two in south Egypt and one in Cairo, most in hrawls between supporters of rival candidates, the official, who asked not to be named, said.

He said more violence was expected on Wednesday run-offs due to "the high competition" adding that police numbers had been boosted.

Four people have been on hunger strike since last week's elections in protest at alleged vote-rigging, police said.

The four protesters who served as opposition observers at polling stations during Wednesday's vote have been taken to hospital in the southern province of Qena.

They told police they began the strike "because of the fraud and rigging they witnessed in the polling statioos."

Egypt's main secular opposition party meanwhile dropped its threat to boycott the second round of elections, a party official said.

"We confirm that we will participate in the second round" on Wednesday, the liberal Wafd Party's secretary general, Saad Fakhri Abdul Nur, told AFP. "We will run at any cost even if we'll ooly have one candidate elected."

The Wafd said Sunday it was considering a boycott of the run-off "to protest the electoral fraud hy the state" in voting last Wednesday when the opposition failed to win a single seat.

Papandreou regains consciousness, but not yet breathing on his own

ATHENS (Agencies) — Premier Andreas Papandreou on Monday regained consciousness for the first time io a week hut doctors said efforts to remove him from a respirator were not yet successful.

"The premier's condition is stahle and be is in contact with his surroundings," said Panaghiotis Poulis, president of the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre.

He added Mr. Papandreou remained on a kidoey machine, was heing fed through a tube in his stomach and that doctors were continuing "attempts to gradually disconnect him from the respirator." He could not say when that would happen.

Mr. Poulis, who is not a physician hut a banker, was forced to read the statement after none of the 15 doctors cariog for Mr. Papandreou wanted to hrief reporters.

"No doctor wants to assume this task," he explained. Dr. Grigoris Skalkeas, who resigned as spokesman for the team Sunday, said in a written statement that he quit because "the objectiveness of the hriefing was placed in douht."

Many local media and the Athens Medical Union — a doctor's professiooal organisation — have criticised the hospital for failing to provide more details on Mr. Papandreou's conditioo.

The politics of uncertainty snrrounding Mr. Papandreou's illness have spread far beyood the hospital he entered suffering from pneumonia on Nov. 20.

Heavily sedated and on mechanical support for most of the two weeks he has been hospitalised, Mr. Papandreou has neither been replaced as premier nor have been any attempts to do so. Interior Minister Akis Tsochadzopoulos, the most senior cabinet member, has been filling in for him when necessary.

Mr. Papandreou had been in frail health eveo before his hospitalisation. Heart surgery in 1988 forced him to keep public appearances to a minimum since his return to power in 1993. He also served as premier from 1981 to 1989.

Mr. Papandreou has been hooked to life support machines in critical condition for six days and doctors doohted they could get his lungs to function on their own.

"The premier's age and the hardship he has gone through affects negatively the strength of his lung muscles," one doctor treating Mr. Papandreou was quoted as saying in the Athens newspaper Ta Nea. "It is thus uncertain if our efforts will hring any results."

Another doctor at the Onassis heart centre who requested anonymity told Reuters: "The premier should already have been taken off the respirator to avoid secondary infections. If this happens it will prove fatal."

As Mr. Papandreou fought for his life, jockeying for position in any succession race continued behind closed doors.

"No one wants to be remembered as the person who pushed Andreas Papandreou out of politics while he was critically ill in hospital," one diplomat said.

Samaritans get seat in self-rule council

JERICHO (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has decided to reserve a seat for the small Samaritan community on the future autonomy council, a senior official said Monday.

"The president (Yasser Arafat) has decreed an additional seat on the council for the Samaritans," the Palestinian local government minister, Saeh Erakat, told AFP.

"The number of seats will now he 83," instead of the initial 82 set out in the September deal to extend self-rule, he said, adding it had been done with Israel's approval.

The Samaritans, who number about 400 in the northern West Bank town of Nahlus, follow a religion based on Judaism hut far from orthodox practices.

The Samaritans, who only recognise the Peotateuch, the first five books of the Old Testment in the Bihle, speak Hebrew and Arahic and in theory have the same political status of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

They practise endogamy or marrying within their community and also incldue several hundred members in Israel io the town of Holon near Tel Aviv.

Three other seats on the autonomy cooncil will be reserved for minority Christians in East Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah.

The first Palestinian elections are set for Jan. 20 when they will vote for the self-rule council and a president of the executive authority.

Egypt-Uganda-Eritrea 'axis' against Sudan, Bashir asserts

CAIRO (Agencies) — Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir, in comments published on Monday, accused Egypt, Eritrea and Uganda of forming an "axis" to topple Khartoum's Islamic government.

"Any observer can see the axis against Sudan coming together with the goal to overthrow its government and its Islamic orientation," Lieutenant-General Bashir told the Arah daily Al Hayat.

"We were about to liberate all Sudanese territory from (southern) rehel traitors when the Ugandan offensive took place." Gen. Bashir said, referring to an offensive hy southern rebels that Sudan says Uganda has aided.

"Eritrea has also participated in this offensive with tanks, heavy weapons, and experts, while Egyptian military airplanes transported this equipment," he said.

He said the offensive, which began in late October, was "a campaign from all directions against Sudan" in which "the coordination is obvious because meetings between the three heads of state have taken place in broad daylight."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has met his Ugandan counterpart Yoseri Museveni several times in Cairo in the past month.

A Sudanese government newspaper said Monday Ethiopia had tortured and then expelled 13 Sudanese detained after the attempt to kill President Muharak in Addis Ahaha earlier this year.

The governmeot-owned Al Ingaz Al Watani said the 13, who arrived in Khrtoum on Sunday, had beeo detained for over five months without being charged and had been tortured.

Diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Sudan have been strained since September after Addis Ababa accused Sudan of failing to hand over a suspect in the assassination hid.

Sudan denies the man is within its horders, hut Ethiopia has hanned all flights betweeo the two countries, scaled down its diplomatic representation and closed down two consulates.

The paper quoted one of the deportees as saying the Ethiopian authorities had mistaken him for Mohammad Seraj Eddin who is suspected of masterminding the plot to kill Mr. Muharak.

In October, Sudan reported that Ethiopia had deported 19 Sudanese who were also detained after the June assassination attempt.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lebanon port workers must pay for strike

BEIRUT (R) — Beirut port workers must be punished for a six-day strike last week that paralysed Lebanoo's main trade gateway, Lebanese Transport Minister Omar Miskwai was quoted on Monday as saying. "The demands for which the workers unjustly weot on strike made the government lose money, therefore the workers must be punished," Mr. Miskawi said in remarks published by Beirut oewspapers on Monday. The 2,500 workers ended the strike on Thursday after Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri promised to look into the reasons that led to the stoppage. More than 70 per ceot of Lebanon's trade passes through the port and customs does are a major element of the government's income. The strike was held to protest against Mr. Miskawi's delay in approving a pay agreement the workers reached with management last June. "I don't accept that anyone solve a problem between me and those who mutinied on all the foundations of the concepts of workers and strikes, Mr. Miskawi added.

Israeli army officers to ride in FIATs

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli army officers are to swop their French-made Peugeot 205s cars for Italian FIATs, the defence ministry said Monday. FIAT will deliver 1,000 Punto SX models to the army over the oext three years. The Italian carmaker won the cootract io an open bid that included Peugeot and South Korean companies Hyundai and Daihatsu. The Israeli officers are provided with a car for their duties.

Gaza port could open by May

GAZA CITY (AP) — The Gaza City port could be ready to receive cargo as early as May 1996, the Ministry of Planning said Monday. Construction of two docks funded by the Dutch and French will begio in mid-March, officials said. The project will cost up to $60 million. The Palestinians plan to huild an industrial zone alongside the port. Nabil Shaath, Palestinian minister of planning, annoumced the plans after meetiog with the Israeli coordinator in the territories, Oreo Shachor.

Lebanese newspaper fined for false drugs story

BEIRUT (R) — A Beirut court fined a Lebanese newspaper on Monday for puhlishing an unsubstantiated story that a government minister's chauffeur was a drug user, and ordered it to pay the minister token compensation. The puhlications court imposed a fine of six million Lebanese pounds ($3,752) on Al Diyar daily's editor, Yousef Houwayyek, for the report on the driver of Electricity Minister Elias Hobeika. The court also ordered Mr. Houwayyek to pay Mr. Hobeika symbolic compensation of one Lehanese pound — or just 0.06 U.S. cents — which he claimed in the suit.

Bid to postpone Turkish elections falls

ANKARA (AP) — The Dec. 24 date for parliamentary elections stood firm Monday after not enough deputies showed up for a session to push for the halloting's postponement. Some 118 deputies had called for parliament to reconvene to pass a hill putting off the appointment at the polls. The legislature had gone into recess last month to allow parties to launch their electioo campaigns. But Monday's session failed to get the required quorum of 150 deputies in the 450-seat legislature. Those seeking postponement were deputies whose candidacies were turned down by their parties.

COLUMN

Peres puts Israeli ministers on the clock

TEL AVIV(R) — Israeli ministers have to do some fast talking these days if they want to get their points across at weekly cahinet meetings. Prime Minister Shimon Peres has installed a chess clock in the cabinet room and limited each minister's talk-time to five minutes when a dehate looks likely to drag oo. "It rings softly. The clock is next to me and a minister understands his time is up," Cabinet Secretary Shmuel Hollander told Israel's Army Radio Mooday. The only exception? Mr. Peres, himself. "It's in his nature to be very hrief in what he says at the cabinet," Mr. Hollander said. The measure is the latest control Mr. Peres has clamped on ministers since taking over from assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin last month. Mr. Peres has banished the media from their traditional "stakeout" in the parking lot of the prime minister's office during cahinet meetings, effectively denying ministers the opportunity to comment immediately on the proceedings.

Pope canonises founder of religious order

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Roman Catholic Churcb's oewest saint is a Frenchman born of a nohle family and founder of a missionary order that began working with Eskimos and American Indians. Pope John Paul II Sunday canonised Eugene De Mazenod, who was horn in Aix-En-Provence in 1782 and whose family fled to Italy to escape the upheaval of the French Revolution. De Mazenod returned to France, determined to help the unfortunate. At age 29, he was ordained a priest and set to work helping the poor of Paris and its countryside. In 1816, he established the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, an order he continued to guide even after becoming Bishop of Marseille. The orders' first missionaries set out in 1841 for Alaska and western Canada. Later, other missionaries worked in southern African and on the island now called Sri Lanka. De Mazenod, who died in 1861, is the 274th saint proclaimed hy Pope John Paul during his 17 years as Pope.

Israeli doctors separate siamese twins

PETAH TIKVA, Israel (R) — Israeli doctors successfully separated siamese twins Sunday only hours after the girls were born joined at the intestine, a hospital spokesman said. "They were separated successfully and are in excellent coodition," said a spokesman for Schneider Childreo's Medical Centre wbere the twins were born. Dr Eliyahu Wielunsky, deputy director of the centre near Tel Aviv, said it was hard to predict how successful surgeons would be in reconstructing the girls' intestinal and urological systems. Officials at the centre said it was the sixth such recorded case in medical history. Most siamese twins are born connected at the chest. The girls, delivered by caesarean section in the 35th week of pregnancy, had a comhined weight of 5.7 kilogrammes. "If the girls survive the initial operation today, they will likely require years of rehabilitation and repeated surgery," Dr. Wielunsky said hefore the surgery ended. Israeli physicians had never attempted to separate twins joined at the intestine.